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ABSTRACT

The manual presents intervention strategies designed by Project MEDIA (Middle and Elementary Direct Instruction Alternatives) to aid the transition of both nonhandicapped and mainstreamed handicapped students from elementary (K-5) to middle (6-8) school. The manual is divided into six sections with topics of specific problem areas alphabetized within each: (1) communication (including inter-school, teacher/parent and student/student communication); (2) general strategies (guidelines for grading, manual alphabet, ways to show caring); (3) instructional techniques (including student motivation, reinforcement and recognition of students); (4) study skills (alphabetizing, homework completion, outlining, test taking, note taking, creative thinking); (5) coping skills (adjustment to different teachers, self concept building, satisfactory peer relationships, relaxation, school survival skills); and (6) content areas (including art, careers, home economics, industrial arts, language, mathematics, music, reading, science, and social studies). (CL)

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A MANUAL OF INSTRUCTIONAL STRATEGIES

(Project M.E.D.I.A.)

1984

JEFFERSON COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Department of Instruction and Support Services

ADMINISTRATIVE STAFF

Donald W. Ingwerson, Ed.D.	Superintendent
Dawson Orman	Deputy Superintendent for Instruction and Support Services
Booker T. Rice, Ed.D.	Assistant Superintendent for Instruction
Beverly Jones	Director Inservice Education
Pat Montgomery	Inservice Program Specialist

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Materials Production, Durrett Education Center
4409 Preston Highway
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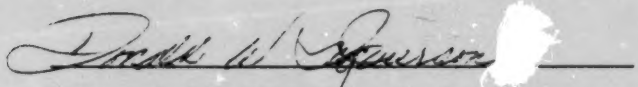
SUPERINTENDENT'S MESSAGE

The Jefferson County Public Schools is dedicated to setting and achieving a standard of educational excellence for all students whom the system serves.

This standard responds to three interfacing documents, the Jefferson County Public Schools' Philosophy of Education which promotes self-realization in a free society, the Learner Goals which proclaim the community's educational values, and the District Comprehensive Educational Plan which provides the Board of Education's commitment of resources.

Providing this standard of educational excellence is an ongoing and evolving process of assessment, development, and evaluation. It is professionals attending the cognitive and affective needs of the students. It emphasizes curriculum and curriculum-related processes.

The school system uses feedback and evaluation data, including professional staff opinion and test scores to identify programmatic needs and to assess the achievement of stated objectives. Since curriculum development is characterized by continuous change and adaptation, we urge all interested persons to make their concerns known, thus ensuring continuing community input.



Donald W. Ingwerson, Ed.D., Superintendent
Jefferson County Public Schools

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Writers

Judy Ashmore
Merrily Crowe
Linda Miller
Vickie Schuckmann
Bettie Weyler

Reviewers

Mary Jo Ahler
Threse Allen
Stefanie Auslander
Pam Ballou
Rita Baldwin
Lana Bentley
Roberta Brown
Sue Brown
Jennie Capitini
Susan Covert
Merrelene Dickerson
Mary Fisher
Sandra Gerbino
Jennifer Greulich
Chester Hall
Mary Hamilton
Patricia Hulak
Louise Keller
Rosellyn Kirk
June LaMar
Ann Mitchell
Cheryl Merrill
Bill Munro-Leighton
Donna Price
Debbie Semenick
Meryl Simon
Francis Smith
Janet Varon
Paul Whiteley
Connie Wilson
Doris Witt

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JEFFERSON COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS PHILOSOPHY

WE BELIEVE . . .

That each person is of worth, is endowed with human dignity, is unique, and is entitled to respect as an individual.

That self-realization, self-discipline, quality in human relationships, and appreciation for one's cultural heritage are essential to the full development of the individual.

That the contributions of our diverse backgrounds--racial, ethnic, religious, social, economic, and political--are essential to the strength and richness of our society.

That the correlation of these backgrounds in our school system, both in curriculum and in practice, is necessary and essential to quality education.

That the freedoms guaranteed by the Constitution of the United States and by the Bill of Rights are essential to a democratic society and that all persons need to understand both the privileges and the responsibilities of citizenship.

That since we live in a changing world, all persons need to be prepared to meet, evaluate, and adjust to change creatively and intelligently.

That effective education comes from a responsible and mutual effort on the part of the school, the church, the family, and the community-at-large. This includes sharing in the determination of goals and in providing necessary resources.

That the school, student, family, and the community-at-large need to realize the significant role played by the other in the educative process.

That the public school is a fundamental part of our tradition and has a responsibility to the individual and the society in which we live.

WE BELIEVE THAT IT IS THE GOAL OF OUR SCHOOLS . . .

To provide education at the earliest appropriate age and to seek and identify the needs of each individual student on a continuing basis.

To provide the necessary tools and incentives to assure each student the highest quality of education.

To provide the necessary programs, training, and qualified and supportive personnel to motivate all students to achieve according to their individual learning patterns and rates of growth in order to realize their maximum potentials intellectually, economically, socially, culturally, and physically.

To provide a climate wherein the uniqueness of the cultures that each individual brings to the classroom setting is positively received.

To provide the structures, policies, and practices that reflect the multi-ethnic nature of our community through the composition of administrative staff, faculties, and student bodies.

WE BELIEVE . . .

That the philosophy of education of the Jefferson County Public Schools must be regularly reevaluated by the schools, students, parents, and the community-at-large.

BOARD OF EDUCATION GOALS

Staff will continue the commitment to provide an improved quality educational program and an integrated school system.

Students will master basic skills which include the areas of vocational, artistic, and computer education.

Employees' performance and job skills will be evaluated and the staff will be recognized for improved efficiency, productivity, and contributions.

Public information and community programs will be based on a comprehensive plan of open and honest communication to enhance community ownership.

Staff will operate a cost-effective school system designed around student needs.

INTRODUCTION

Project M.E.D.I.A.

In the fall of 1982 the project M.E.D.I.A. (Middle and Elementary Direct Instruction Alternatives) was federally funded under Education of the Handicapped PL 91-230. It was a joint venture of the Jefferson County Public Schools, the Jefferson County Teachers' Association, and the University of Louisville.

The project's goals were to aid "at-risk" and mainstreamed exceptional child education students in their transition from elementary (K-5) to middle (6-8) school and to assist them in becoming successful in the new environment. These students had been identified in an informal needs assessment as not being able to cope with the changes demanded of them during this time of transition.

As the project progressed, it was discovered that many regular program students were experiencing difficulties as well. Hence, this manual of intervention strategies was written and a series of workshops were developed to present to fifth and sixth grade teachers whose students were most affected during these transitional years. It was also found that the manual contained strategies effective for students in other grades and could be used by a variety of teachers working with students to meet individual needs.

During the first year of the project, eight teacher trainers were selected as a cross-section of elementary, middle, and high school regular program teachers and exceptional child education teachers in Jefferson County Public Schools. They worked with sixth grade teachers at Newburg and Southern Middle Schools to identify specific concerns to be addressed in the manual. In the spring fifth grade teachers from the elementary schools feeding to these two middle schools and regional personnel were trained, along with the sixth grade teachers, to field-test the manual.

The 1983-84 school year found additional teachers being trained to lead inservice, with 20 hours being presented for this core group along with teachers from Frost Middle School and their elementary feeders. These workshops presented in-depth looks at the major concerns identified by a survey of the teachers. The manual was also refined and expanded during this year.

In the final year of the project, inservice will be extended to all teachers in Jefferson County Public Schools, focusing on strategies to use in the classroom with students who are experiencing difficulty in coping with the demands of the regular program setting.

USE OF THE MANUAL

Scan the manual to become familiar with its format and content. Then, whenever you have a classroom situation that requires meeting the individual needs of a student, refer to the manual for possible strategies to use. The five teacher trainers who wrote the manual have incorporated ideas that had proved successful; remember, however, that you need to select strategies that compliment your style of teaching and the specific needs of the student.

The manual is divided into six sections: Communication, General Strategies, Instructional Techniques, Study Skills, Coping Skills, and Content Areas. Topics of specific problem areas are alphabetized within each section. Under each topic you will find strategies listed which can be tried with a student experiencing that particular difficulty. The format will allow you to add additional notes or articles that pertain to that specific area.

Communication differs from the other sections because it does not deal entirely with student strategies. It presents ideas for communication among teachers, parents, and administrators as well.

General Strategies is a listing of methods that have proved to be successful over the years in assisting students. You will probably be familiar with many of them; others may be new. Frequently, methods will be repeated and expanded in other sections under specific subtopics.

Instructional Techniques highlights several principles of learning which can be appropriately used with all students regardless of specific grade level or content.

Study Skills and Coping Skills address the problem areas that students may encounter in learning activities or in social/behavioral activities, respectively.

Content Areas provides suggestions for presenting subject matter in the various disciplines.

Throughout the manual there are cross-references to other topics which may provide additional ideas for use with an individual student.

We hope that you will find this manual helpful as you strive to meet the needs of your students.

Communication

Importance of Communication

Effective communication is vital if a mainstreamed student is to succeed. The special education teacher and the regular education teacher must work together. They need to agree on what is expected of the student in the regular class. The at-risk and regular program students may also benefit from teacher communication.

Likewise, the parent(s) needs to be informed of requirements for the student and should be notified of progress or lack of progress at various intervals, not just at grade reporting time.

Included in the total communication process at school are administrators, media center specialists, teachers, and any school support persons who may come in contact with the student. Keep lines of communication open. Actively seek out others' suggestions and follow up on them.

Forms which may be duplicated are included at the end of this section.

Inter-school Communication

Transition from elementary to middle school is difficult for many students. They must adjust to differences in organizational structure as well as academic expectations.

Communication between elementary school teachers and middle school teachers can facilitate students' transition. It is advisable to schedule a meeting for the fifth and sixth grade teachers to discuss the differences in grading, class schedules, and requirements.

Conduct a tour of the middle school facility.

Provide copies of all forms which students must independently complete the first week of school. Filling out the forms could be class/homework assignments for fifth grade students in the spring. (See pp. 19-21.)

In the fall, the sixth grade teacher(s) may desire additional information on a certain student. Locate student's Middle School Student Information Feeder Card (p. 23) completed by the fifth grade teacher if further information is needed. Call or meet with student's fifth grade teacher or, if a meeting is not feasible, send a form requesting specific information from the former teacher (p. 25).

Plan a field trip to a middle school for fifth grade students.

Communicate to parents of incoming middle school students the specific demands of the middle school setting and the skills students need to succeed in middle school. Share the M.E.D.I.A. brochure "Transitions Are Tough" when meeting with parents.

Intra-school Communication

Suggested Plans for Beginning of the Semester

Give faculty/staff master lists by grade groups to be updated as new students enter.

Provide individual teachers with information (e.g., abilities, needs, special learning techniques, health problems) for specific students (p. 27).

Ongoing Communication Ideas

S.O.S.--Teachers identify students who are having academic/behavioral problems for help with intervention strategies (page 29). *Suggestion: give forms to teachers at the beginning of the year and explain their use. Also, keep a supply of these forms in the teachers' lounge for ongoing communication during the school year.

Areas of Specific Concern (p. 31)--Use as a follow-up to S.O.S. or midterm progress report when students are experiencing difficulty.

Progress Check (page 23)--Use as a follow-up to S.O.S. or as a midterm progress report.

Student Progress Check List (p. 35)--Use as a weekly progress report. Note that it can also be used by students participating in extracurricular activities.

Behavioral Check List (p. 37)--Use with students who have been identified as possible candidates for BD/ED placement.

SBARC Notice (p. 39)--Notify all involved teachers who need to be informed of SBARC meetings.

Informal Communication

Take advantage of off-duty time (lounge, lunch, before/after school) to touch base and communicate with other teachers concerning mainstreamed students.

Thank teachers for dealing with special students (p. 41).

*Completed forms may be given to: counselor(s), regional resource teacher(s), exceptional child education teacher(s), homeroom teacher, parent(s), assistant principal(s), principal.

General Communication Ideas

Information concerning any special problems of specific students needs to be shared with other school personnel who are responsible for that student during some portion of the day, for example: an inordinate fear of dogs, a hearing loss, insulin therapy, hemophelia.

The first faculty meeting of a school year is an opportune time to communicate procedures and innovations to the entire school staff.

Suggestions for Teachers

Plan grade group/department/team meetings to include appropriate administrators.

When communicating with other teachers avoid using "jargon" specific to your area of teaching.

Consider other teachers as partners in an honest team approach. Remember that sharing information and ideas helps ensure a better education for each student.

Discuss all forms/communications with school administrators and obtain approval before sending them. Copies of any forms used may be included in the school handbook.

Student/Student Communication

Students already attending the middle school can play an important role in assisting new or incoming students.

Assign a seventh or eighth grade student to act as a new student's buddy. Ask the older student to serve as a guide and source of needed information.

Have sixth grade students write letters to fifth grade students. They could describe the middle school and give the student's point of view as to what changes are to be expected.

Involve the middle school student council/Beta Club/drill team by allowing them to visit the elementary schools and talk with fifth grade students.

Allow middle school students to plan a program to familiarize new students with middle school procedures. (The program can be produced in the spring for visiting fifth grade classes or in the fall for all new students.)

Teacher/Parent Communication

Parents of handicapped children are fully involved in planning and reviewing their child's school programs. Parents today have the right to participate in many decisions that once were made by schools alone. Parents must give written consent prior to the initial evaluation of their child, must be involved in the program plan that is written for their child, and must give written approval prior to their child's initial placement in a special education class.

At the beginning of the year consider the following:

The parent(s) needs to be informed of rules, requirements, and materials needed (pp. 45 and 47) may be adapted to meet your specific needs.

Sample Needs Assessment (p. 49)

Homework Notification (p. 51)

Ongoing Communication Ideas

During the school year, students can take home individual praise notes, homework reminders, progress reports, and other parent communications. This effort helps foster a positive parent-teacher relationship. Keeping a copy of written communication is recommended. The following forms can be duplicated to aid in parent/teacher communication:

Praise notes/certificate (pp. 54-63)
Homework reminder (p. 63)
Progress reports (pp. 33, 35)
Other parent communications (pp. 65, 67)

Suggestions for Phone Conferences

Be sure you have a home and work phone number for the parent(s) of each student. Do not depend on the school office for the numbers.

Do not let a problem persist; call immediately and follow-up as necessary.

Keep a log of phone calls, indicating whether or not they were completed.

Send home a follow-up note to parent(s) to indicate positive progress (p. 67).

Do not stop communicating even if parent(s) does not respond to your efforts. Keep showing that you care!

Teacher/Parent Conferences

Teacher/parent conferences can enhance the relationship between the home and school and benefit student's learning environment. However, it is the responsibility of the teacher to take the lead in creating a climate which will foster honest and positive communication.

For a conference, the physical setting should foster warmth and openness. Consider the following suggestions:

Arrange furniture to eliminate nonverbal communication obstacles, such as the teacher's desk.

Sit beside the parent, so that student's work can be viewed jointly.

When possible conduct the conference in a private location free from interruptions/distractions.

Research has shown that nonverbal communication can have more influence than verbal communication.

Suggestions for Nonverbal Communication

Maintain good eye contact.

Keep pleasant facial expressions.

Make your posture relaxed and open.

Other Suggestions for Conferences

Be receptive to suggestions made by parent(s).

Listen to parental concerns; remember that the parent(s) loves this student.

Be professional at all times. Use appropriate but non-intimidating language. Define educational jargon, when used.

Keep a journal of all conferences.

JEFFERSON COUNTY ENROLLMENT INFORMATION
(Please keep information up to date.)

rance Date	Grade/Section		School	
t Name	First	Middle	Date of Birth	Race/Sex
lress Where Student Lives		Zip	Phone	
t School Attended	Address	Zip	Trans. or Non-Trans.	Bus No.
Name of Person Child Lives With			Give Relationship	
ne to Contact in Emergency		Phone	Immunization Certificate Expiration Date:	
student attended a Jefferson County public school before? en?			Exceptional Child Education Designation:	
upation of Father or Guardian	Place of Employment		Employment Phone	
upation of Mother or Guardian	Place of Employment		Employment Phone	

P-401-1 (3/83)

Give below names and ages of brothers, sisters, and any others under 18 years of age living in the home who are not attending a public school.

Name	Birth Date Mo.	Day	Year	Attending What School?	Year (Grade)	If not in school, why?

SCHOOL OFFICE ONLY

Year (Grade)	Teacher
1	
2	
3	
4	
5	
6	

(Please check) Transported: Yes / No

Year (Grade): 1 2 3 4 5 6

Bus No.

Year (Grade): 1 2 3 4 5 6

Transfer To _____ School

Mo.____ Day____ Year____

Date of Withdrawal

Mo.____ Day____ Year____

Family Physician	Office Phone	Office Address

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CALENDAR CARD

F 439-3

ME _____ GRADE/SECTION _____ BIRTHDATE _____

ME PHONE _____ BUSINESS PHONE _____

DRESS _____ ZIP _____ AGE _____ LOCKER NO. _____

ME OF PERSON WITH WHOM CHILD LIVES _____

AUGUST 1983				
M	T	W	TH	F
				[25] [26]
29	30	31		

SEPTEMBER				
M	T	W	TH	F
			1	2
[5]	6	7	8	9
12	13	14	15	16
19	20	21	22	23
26	27	28	29	30

OCTOBER				
M	T	W	TH	F
3	4	5	6	7
10	11	12	13	14
17	18	19	20	21
24	25	26	27	28
31				

NOVEMBER				
M	T	W	TH	F
	1	2	3	4
7	8	9	10	11
14	15	16	17	18
21	22	23	[24]	[25]
28	29	30		

DECEMBER				
M	T	W	TH	F
			1	2
5	6	7	8	9
12	13	14	15	16
[19]	[20]	[21]	[22]	[23]
[26]	[27]	[28]	[29]	[30]

JANUARY 1984				
M	T	W	TH	F
[2]	3	4	5	6
9	10	11	12	13
16	17	18	19	20
23	24	25	26	27
30	31			

FEBRUARY				
M	T	W	TH	F
		1	2	3
6	7	8	9	[10]
13	14	15	16	17
20	21	22	23	24
27	28	29		

MARCH				
M	T	W	TH	F
			1	2
5	6	7	8	9
12	13	14	15	[16]
19	20	21	22	23
26	27	28	29	30

APRIL				
M	T	W	TH	F
2	3	4	5	6
[9]	[10]	[11]	[12]	[13]
16	17	18	19	20
23	24	25	26	27
30				

MAY-JUNE				
M	T	W	TH	F
	1	2	3	[4]
7	8	9	10	11
14	15	16	17	18
21	22	23	24	25
[28]	29	30	[31]	1
4	5	6	7	8

FALL SEMESTER

	SUBJECT	TEACHER	ROOM
H.R.			
1			
2			
3			
4			
5			
6			

SPRING SEMESTER

	SUBJECT	TEACHER	ROOM
H.R.			
1			
2			
3			
4			
5			
6			

JEFFERSON COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS
Middle School Student Information — Feeder Card
(Please Print All Information)

DATE _____

ne _____
Last First Middle

Sending School _____

Receiving School _____

dress _____
House/Apt. Number Street Zip Code

Grade Next Year _____

one No. _____ Birthdate _____

Immunization Expiration Date: _____

e & Sex Code (Circle One) A B C D Other _____

SCHEDULING INFORMATION

gram (check one): Regular _____ Advance _____ Special Education _____ Bilingual _____

guage Arts: Assigned Level _____ (Circle one) *Above Avg. Avg. Below Avg.* CTBS _____ (Total Reading)

hematics: Assigned Level _____ (Circle one) *Above Avg. Avg. Below Avg.* CTBS _____ (Total Math)

Unified Math (7 & 8) _____ Algebra (8) _____

RRENTLY IN TITLE I READING Yes _____ No _____

ND: Beginning _____ Intermediate _____ Advanced _____ Instrument _____ Years played _____
CHESTRA: Beginning _____ Intermediate _____ Advanced _____ Instrument _____ Years played _____
ORUS (7 & 8): _____
narks: (Attendance, Medical, Physical, etc.):

SPECIAL EDUCATION ONLY

Self-contained _____ Resource _____ LA _____ Math _____ Other _____

H: Self-contained _____ Resource _____ LA _____ Math _____ Other _____

Self-contained _____ Resource _____ Percent of time in BD _____

ECH: _____ HEARING _____ VISION _____

IER: (SPECIFY) _____

MARKS: _____

F-203-2

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MIDDLE SCHOOL TEACHER TO ELEMENTARY TEACHER

Date _____

To:

I have _____ in my class this school year.

I am concerned about: _____

_____

Since you had this student in your class last year, would you provide some information or strategies that would be helpful.

1. Work habits: _____

   _____

2. Special interests: _____

   _____

3. Attendance: _____

   _____

4. Successful techniques used: _____

   _____

   _____

5. Additional suggestions: _____

   _____

6. Was this student enrolled in exceptional child education classes during the 5th grade in school? _____Yes _____No

7. Has this student been tested for exceptional child education and not placed in exceptional child education classes? _____Yes _____No

   If not, why? _____

Thank you for your time in completing this form letter. I appreciate your help. Please return to me via the pony to _____ School.

Sincerely,

STUDENT INFORMATION FORM

STUDENT_____ AGE_____

READING GRADE LEVEL_____ TEST USED_____

COMPREHENSION GRADE LEVEL_____ TEST USED_____

MATH GRADE LEVEL_____ TEST USED_____

BEHAVIOR TRAITS_____

_____

_____

TECHNIQUES TO USE _____

_____

_____

SPECIAL COMMENTS/PERSONAL CONCERNS_____

_____

_____

TEACHER_____

_____

STUDENT'S SCHEDULE

	CLASS	TEACHER
1.		
2.		
3.		
4.		
5.		
6.		
7.		

HOMEROOM

_____IS IN TROUBLE IN _____.

PLEASE SEE ME SOON, THANKS_____

- - - -

AREAS OF SPECIFIC CONCERN

Student _____ Date _____

Teacher _____ Subject _____

Circle all numbers which apply:

A. Assignments
1. Failed to do required work
2. Did required work poorly
3. Did no homework
4. Had poorly done homework
5. Did not hand in work promptly

B. Use of time
1. Habitually wasted time
2. Sought distractions
3. Very slow at getting to work
4. Waited to be told what to do

C. Ability to concentrate
1. Showed slight ability
2. Easily distracted
3. Short span of attention

D. Interest in work
1. Lacking
2. Intermittent
3. Difficult to arouse
4. Not sincere

E. Providing and caring for equipment
1. Often forgets
2. Destructive
3. Often without pencil, etc.
4. Slovenly in using materials
5. Failure to buy books
6. Loss of equipment

F. Class attitude
1. Indifferent
2. Antagonistic
3. Sullen
4. Uncooperative
5. A "disturbing element"

G. Specific difficulties
1. Weak in comprehending reading
2. Unable to select main thought in paragraph
3. Poor in spelling
4. Weak on background
5. Cannot use reference books successfully
6. Inability to follow directions
7. Inability to organize materials
8. Inaccurate
9. Slow
10. Illegible handwriting

H. Additional difficulties
1. Restlessness
2. Lack of neatness in work done
3. Illogical reasoning
4. Poor vision
5. Poor listening skills

I. Comments

PROGRESS CHECK

_____ is my student. Please take a minute to let me know how this student is doing.

_____ Satisfactory

_____ Needs help with _____

_____

_____ Failing because _____

_____

_____ I need to see you.

Behavior _____ Satisfactory

_____ Unsatisfactory because _____

_____

Signed _____

Date _____

Please return to mail box #_____ or room # _____

Thank You!

Exceptional Child Education Teacher_____

STUDENT PROGRESS CHECK LIST

NAME _____ GRADE AND SECTION _____ DATE _____

Subject	Period	Gets to class on time	Brings materials to class	Behaves acceptably	Turns in homework	Participates in class discussions	Completes written assignments	Is passing your class?	Teacher's Initials
	1								
	2								
	3								
	4								
	5								
	6								

Comments:

Parent's Signature _____

BEHAVIORAL CHECK LIST

Student_____ Teacher_____

Class_____ Period_____

✓ = yes o = no	M	T	W	Th	F
1. Was present					
2. Was on time					
3. Brought necessary materials					
4. Attended to class activities					
5. Participated in class activities					
6. Attended to teacher instruction					
7. Attended to teacher directions					
8. Followed directions or attempted to					
9. Attempted assignment					
10. Completed assignment					
11. Did own work					
12. Stayed in own seat					
13. Kept hands to self					
14. Talked aloud only at appropriate times					
15. Refrained from using profane language					
16. Ignored inappropriate behavior of others					
17. Argued with the teacher					
18. Argued with peers					
19. Insulted teacher					
20. Insulted peers					
21. Was physically aggressive					
22. Sought ways to leave class early					
23. Was sent from class to office					
24. Remained awake all period					
Additional Behaviors to Monitor					
25.					

The following are not necessary but may help the student and parent to be aware of particular strengths and weaknesses:

Shared this information with student at week's end. yes_____ no_____

Felt student was making an effort to improve behavior. yes_____ no_____

Communicated with parent in some form this week. yes_____ no_____

Student is passing tests. yes_____ no_____

Student is turning in daily assignments. yes_____ no_____

SBARC NOTICE

Dear _____,

A School Based Admission and Release Committee Meeting (SBARC) has been planned for _____ to discuss his/her progress and future placement. Since this student is in your _____ class, you are invited to attend. The meeting will be on _____ at _____ in room _____.

We will evaluate his/her progress and determine what classes he/she will be taking in either the regular or special program.

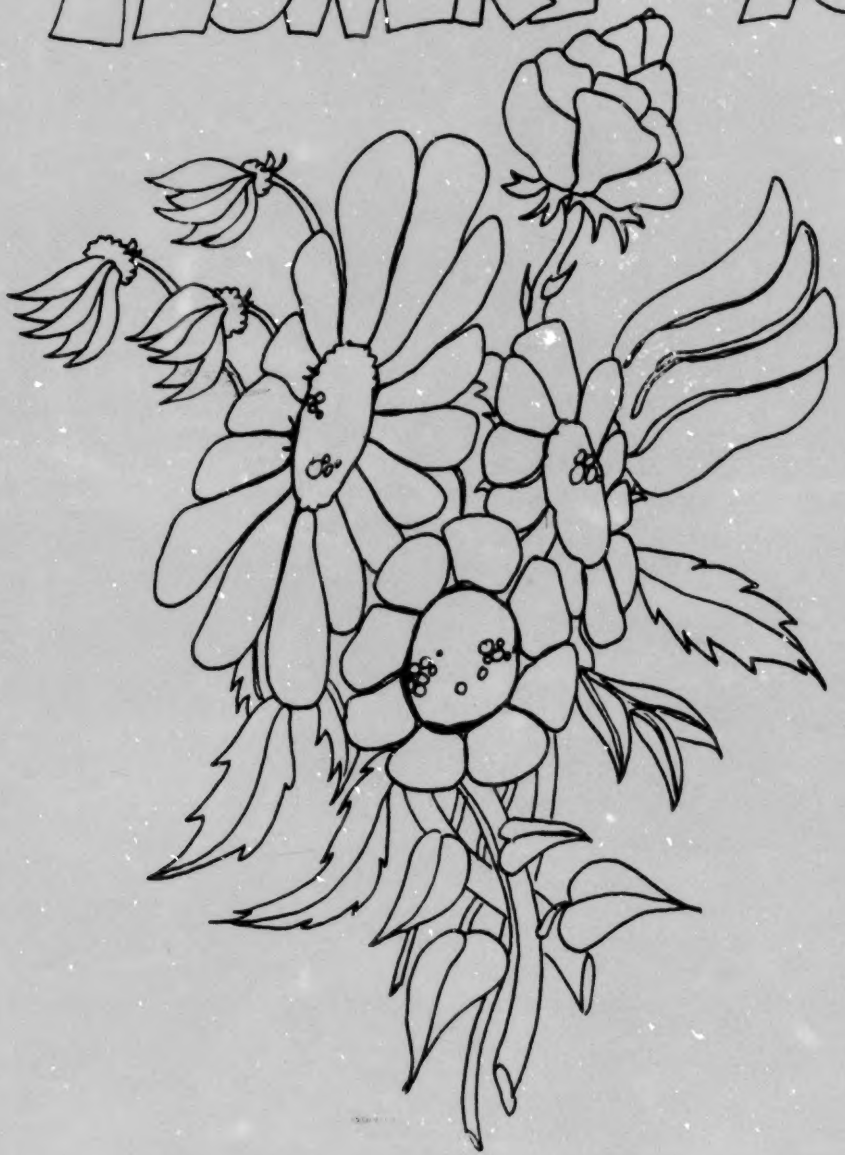
If you cannot attend the SBARC meeting in person, please provide me with the following information by _____, if possible:

1. A written work sample from your class.

2. Information concerning his/her progress in your class.

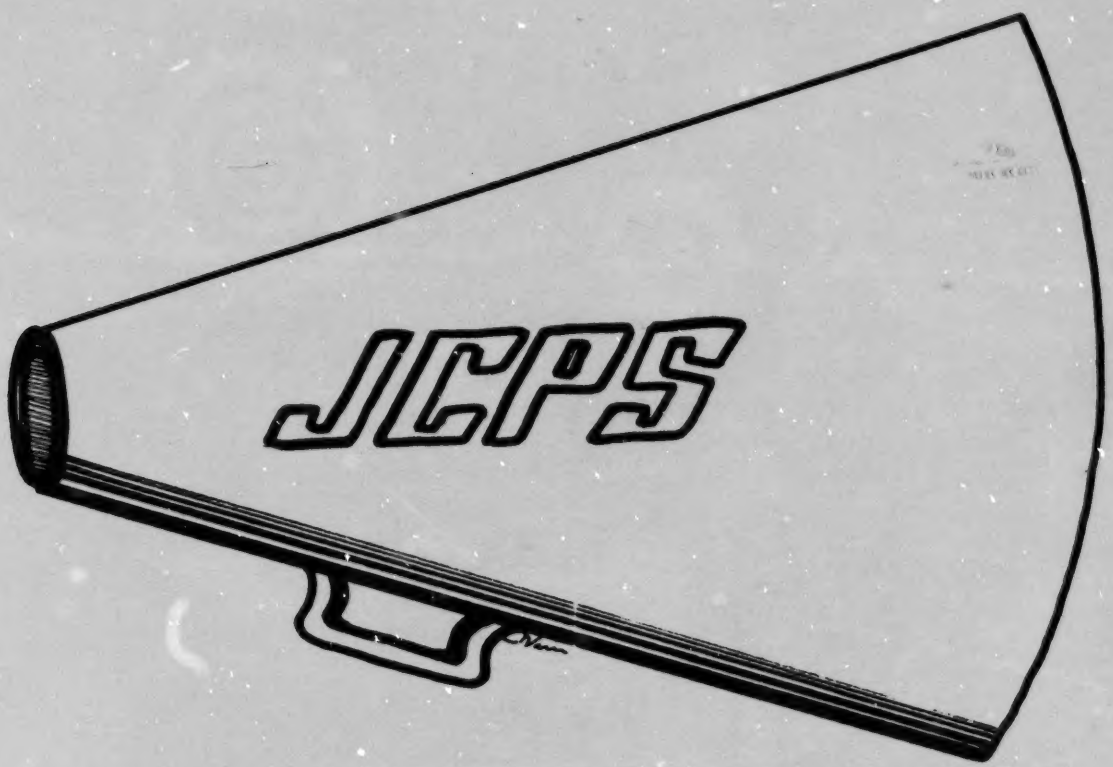
- - - -

FLOWERS TO YOU!



THANKS FOR HELPING ME!

CHEERS FOR A SUPER JOB!



THANKS FOR HELPING OUR

EXCEPTIONAL EDUCATION STUDENTS

Dear _____,

We welcome you and your child to _____ for the new school year. We believe that this will be a very exciting and rewarding year.

We expect all students to behave appropriately in our classes. We will not tolerate any behavior which stops us from teaching or prevents others from learning. For this purpose, we have developed the following guidelines.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____

To help your child to be successful in school, please see that the following materials are provided.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____

Please check daily for homework assignments and encourage their completion. Also, in order to stay in close contact with you, we will send a progress report home whenever necessary.

It is in your child's best interest that we work together. Please sign the tear-off and return it to school tomorrow. If you have any questions, please feel free to call or send a note.

Sincerely,

_____

- -

I read and understand your requirements. You can reach me at _____.
Phone Number

Student_____ Signed_____
Parent(s)

Dear_____,

I am happy that _____ has been assigned to my class for this year. I am looking forward to working with you and your child for a successful school year.

If you have any questions or concerns, please call me or come to school to talk about the questions. The school number is _____. The best times to reach me are _____.

I will be contacting you soon about some of our plans for the year. Please complete the information on the bottom portion of this letter and return it to let me know what times would be convenient for me to contact you.

Thank you,

_____

- -

My home phone number is _____.

Another number at which I can be reached is _____.

The best time to call is _____.

Parent's Name_____

Student's Name_____

Address_____

Date_____

SAMPLE NEEDS ASSESSMENT

PLEASE FILL OUT AND RETURN:

Parent's Name: _____

Please contact me by:

_____ calling this number _____ at _____
(phone number) (best time)

_____ sending notes home

I am interested in . . .

_____ getting regular reports about my child's schoolwork, particularly in _____
(subject)

_____ learning disabilities
_____ how to help my child at home
_____ how to communicate better with my child
_____ how to determine what the educational tests and reports mean
_____ how to take part in developing my child's Individualized Education Program (IEP)
_____ how to manage my child's behavior better
_____ other: _____
_____ community services

I would like to participate more by . . .

_____ helping my child at home with teacher-selected schoolwork
_____ having regular conferences
_____ getting together with other parents
_____ coming to a parent workshop
_____ helping to make classroom materials
_____ helping with field trips or special activities
_____ helping in the classroom
_____ other: _____

My biggest concern for my child this year in school is:

THANK YOU! TEACHER: _____

HOMEWORK NOTIFICATION

Dear _____,

On most evenings, your child will have _____ minutes of homework. Homework assignments will help teach your child to work independently and to take responsibility for completing work.

Your cooperation will help teach your child these skills. Each evening ask your child if he or she has completed the work assigned. If not, please require your child to complete the work before watching TV or playing games. It is always good to help your child decide on a definite time for homework.

If at any time the homework is too difficult for your child to complete independently, let me know. I try to make all homework assignments within the range of your child's skills.

Thank you for your cooperation and support. If you have questions or concerns, please feel free to call me for a conference at _____.

Please sign the form at the bottom of this letter, detach, and return it to me.

Sincerely,

_____

- -

I have read your letter and I support your homework policy.

PARENT SIGNATURE _____

Child's Name _____

Date _____

CERTIFICATE OF MERIT

_____

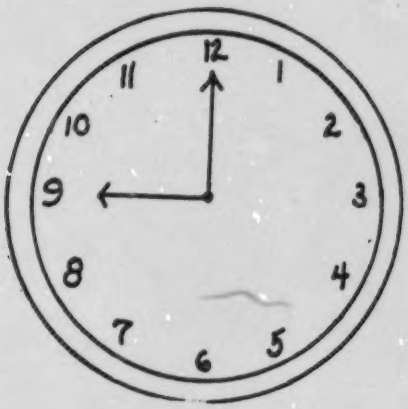
has done excellent work.

_____
Teacher

You hit a home run!

_____

CONGRATULATIONS!!!



FREE TIME!!!

_____ has earned _____
minutes free time.

_____ _____, you walk away with the prize!

NO HOMEWORK
TONIGHT FOR

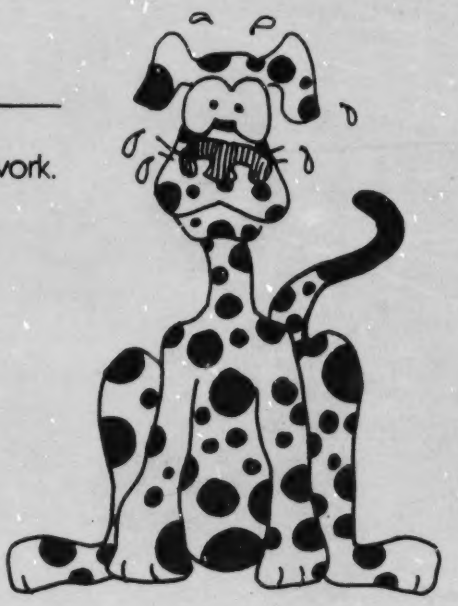
_____

MADE A BIG LEAP IN _____

THIS AWARD IS FOR _____ FOR LEARNING _____

_____

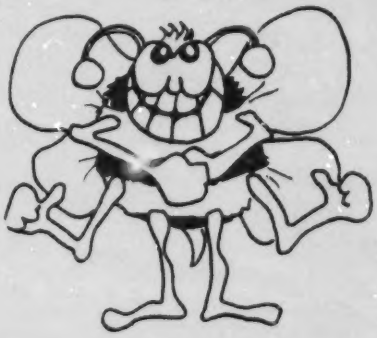
worked like a dog today to finish the work.



_____
Teacher

_____

has had terrific bee-havior today.

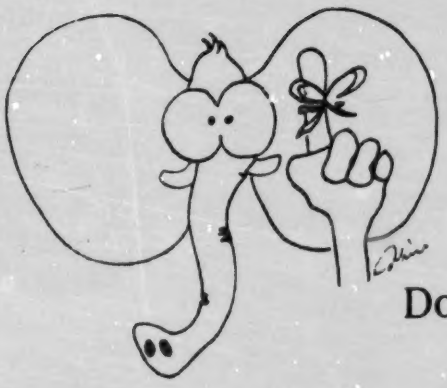


_____
Date

_____
Teacher

Thanks for lending a hand. You are very helpful.

_____
Teacher



Don't Forget

Homework Note

_____
date

_____ needs
(student's name)

time at home to complete
the following assignment:

_____

_____

_____

Please see that it is
completed and returned tomorrow.

_____
student

_____
parent

_____
teacher

Dear _____,

This is just a note to tell you that _____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____.

_____

Signature Date

Date_____

Dear_____,

As a result of our phone conversation on _____,
the following improvements have taken place:

_____

_____

Thank you so much for your cooperation.

Sincerely,

_____

General Strategies

Classroom Strategies at a Glance

The transition from elementary to middle school can be a difficult adjustment for many sixth grade students. Listed below are general strategies which may assist students in the transition.

The organizational structure provided by the Lesson Plan Format will facilitate use of this section.

Standards--State behavioral expectations and materials needed.

Be specific in classroom expectations.

Post rules and consequences for infractions in the classroom.

Structure the class and all activities.

Provide an atmosphere conducive to learning.

Maintain a business-like atmosphere.

Make certain that the materials provided are appropriate to the specific learning.

Be sure all work sheets are uncluttered, clear copies.

Provide teacher-made instruction sheets, study guides, or outlines.

Use bulletin boards to instruct and to assist students.

Allow students to use learning aids and manipulatives, such as tape recorders or typewriters.

Anticipatory Set--Specify what is to be learned, why it is needed, and how it is related to old learnings; and provide for interest and accountability.

Be specific about what is to be learned.

Set objectives that are tangible and reachable.

Help students to understand how they learn most effectively (auditorily, visually, and kinesthetically).

Explain to students why they need to master particular skills.

Use students' realm of experience when showing examples of abstract concepts.

Relate all learning to everyday life.

Relate all teaching to past and future learnings.

Use principles of reinforcement consistently.

Reward students for doing a good job.

Praise students for the smallest achievements.

Be positive; encourage students to do their best.

Feature a student from each class each week to build self-confidence and peer relationships.

Use "sponges" (see the Study Skills section for the topic "Utilizing Sponge Activities").

Pretest--Brief, diagnostic tool

Use to test new learning.

Do not use to test previous learning.

Design to be short and specific.

Teach---Give information, model the learning, and check for understanding.

Employ task analysis when developing a lesson.

Teach one concept at a time.

Simplify the vocabulary and provide definitions.

Teach students key words.

Present the key words visually and auditorily prior to the beginning of a lesson.

Limit the number of concepts, important things to be remembered, and amount of materials involved with learning.

Provide sufficient time for students to complete an assignment.

Give extra time for assignments when students need it.

Reduce the requirements or give alternate assignments, if appropriate.

Teach by example.

Teach from concrete to abstract.

Teach from familiar to unfamiliar.

Encourage questioning; do not assume students understand if they ask no questions.

Vary the level of questions.

Who fought in the Civil War? (FACT)
On which side would you fight? (OPINION)

Become knowledgable of Bloom's Taxonomy (knowledge, comprehension, application, analysis, synthesis, and evaluation). Plan to teach to levels of thinking above the knowledge and comprehension levels. All students can be taught to think at higher levels of thinking if the content is appropriate.

Plan for active student participation both overt (visible) and covert (thinking).

Provide sufficient repetition of experiences/materials to develop overlearning.

Use reviews meaningfully.

Teach students how to paraphrase.

Guided Practice--Activities related to learning which require overt behavior from students and monitoring from teacher.

Make use of signalling techniques (such as "thumbs up if you know the answer," or "show me how many"), student response cards, or slates.

Ask students to support their answers.

Vary response requirements (written/oral).

Give assignments that are just for fun occasionally.

Provide students with a "Job Form" which specifies what students are to accomplish during a certain period of time.

Check students' first response on assignments to be sure directions are being followed.

Assist students on an individual or small-group basis.

Assign peer tutors or buddies to read aloud/interpret assignments, provide individual drill, to take lecture notes by making carbons, to write information dictated by other student, to assist student in completing assignments, to tape written material, or to help in any appropriate manner.

Be available for individual work/conferences with students.

Use cues to emphasize points on a page or in a lecture.

Have high expectations.

Ensure eye contact when you talk.

Use more than one mode of presentation.

Frequently change activities to increase on-task behavior.

Post Test--Brief tool to measure the learning

Teach test-taking strategies.

Maintain constancy in criteria.

Emphasize the number of correct items.

Judge students on the skill tested, rather than handwriting, spelling, or neatness.

Separate grades for content and mechanics.

Keep the standard and work requirements within students' ability to achieve.

Give prompt feedback to students.

Closure--Get statements from students and knowledge of results for the teacher

Have students verbalize the learning.

Be sure questioning of student is specific to the learning.

Formulate questions to ensure higher levels of learning.

Make sure students can apply the learning to life experiences.

Independent Practice--Follow-up activities and homework which is related to the lesson and understood by students

Assign homework which is meaningful and related to classwork.

Make sure student has demonstrated the skill before assigning homework.

Teach student to use the JCPS Homework Hotline.

Give student a second chance on assignment, allowing for corrections.

Guidelines for Grading

Follow the grading guidelines established for Jefferson County Middle Schools. Post them in the classroom to be certain students are aware of them.

Letter grades are--

A = 93 - 100% excellent
B = 86 - 92% above average
C = 79 - 85% average
D = 70 - 78& below average
F = 0 - 69% failure
I = Incomplete due to excused absence

Academic grades are based on the following:

65 - 75% on assigned daily work (participation, homework, class assignments, note-taking, discussion, quizzes, and special projects)
25 - 35% on test scores

Conduct grades are--

A = excellent
B = above average
C = average
D = below average (parent conference advised)
F = unacceptable (parent conference urgently needed)

1. Be certain students know exactly what is expected of them in order to get an A, B, or C and the reason for getting D, F, or I.

2. Allow sufficient time for students to complete an assignment before grading it.

3. Provide feedback on homework, class assignments, reports, projects.

4. Emphasize the number of correct items rather than the number missed when checking students' work.

5. Consider grading students on effort rather than quality of work.

6. Separate grades for content and mechanics.

7. Grade students on the skills/materials learned rather than on handwriting, spelling, complete sentences whenever possible.

8. Contract with students for their grades on an individual basis according to their abilities.

9. Allow students who have difficulty responding in writing to do assignments and/or tests orally.

10. Permit students to tape or write their reports if they are fearful of speaking in front of the class.

11. Vary the types of tests given since some students experience difficulty with certain types.

    See the Study Skills section of this manual for topics: "Types of Tests" and "Testing."

12. Consider grading mainstreamed special education students a bit differently than regular program students.

    Give them a certain number of points on which to build, similar to a handicap in bowling or golf.

    Require less involved answers from them, as long as the pertinent information is included.

    Reduce the length of reports or details required in long-range projects.

    Have the tests administered orally, if appropriate, or rewrite the questions in simpler language.

See the Study Skills section of this manual for topics; "Teaching Test Taking," "Teacning Types of Tests," "Completing Assignments in Class," and "Completing Homework."

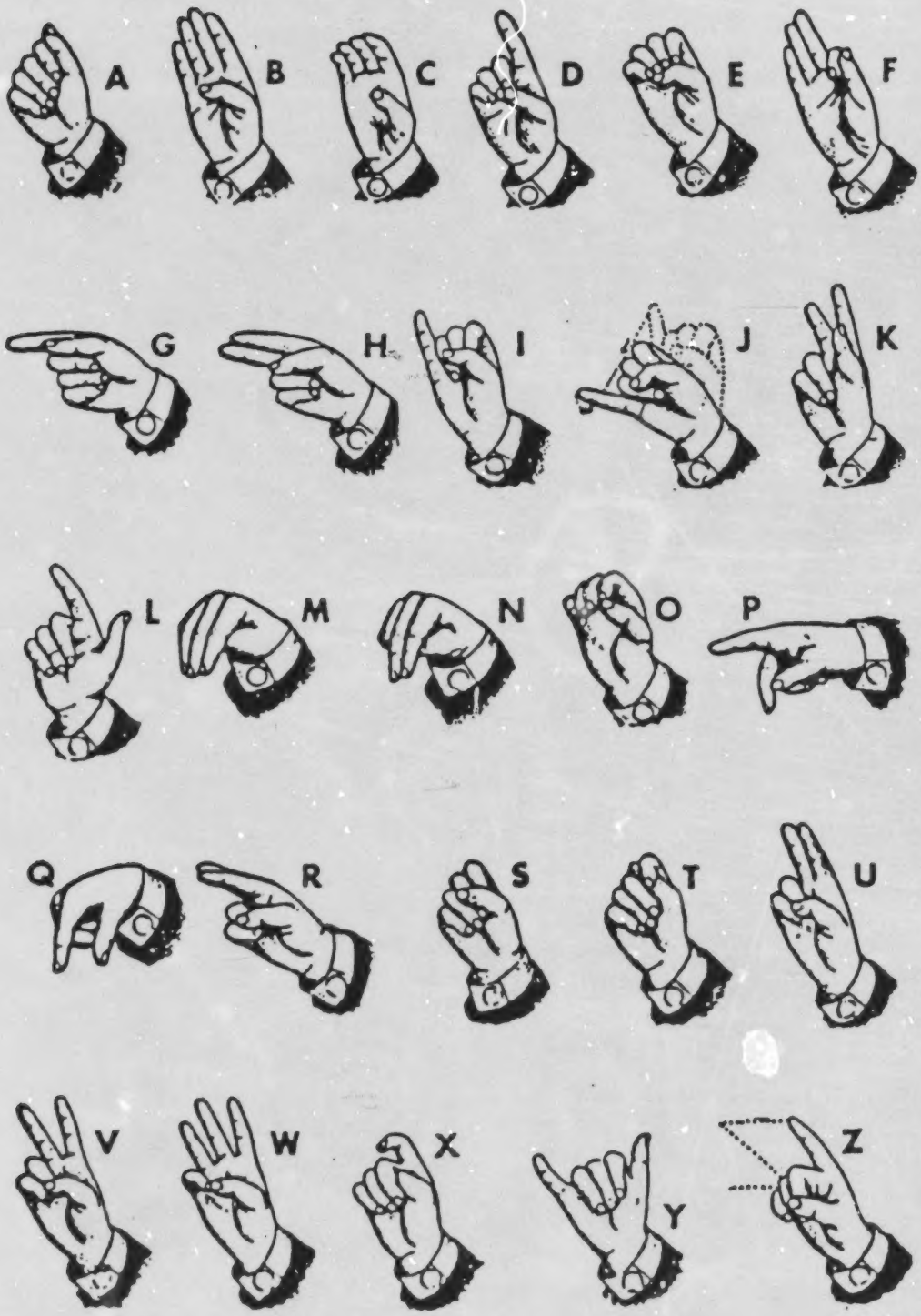
Manual Alphabet

Teach students the manual alphabet.

This provides students with a visual and kinesthetic approach to learning spelling/key words.

It could also be used by the teacher for silent signals to a student who is off-task or needs quick assistance.

Manual Alphabet



Ways to Show Caring

Learn each student's name.

Try to learn the background of each student.

Never embarrass a student.

Offer individual assistance to student who is having difficulty understanding assignments or work.

Alter assignments if student is not capable of completing the work.

Always give students a respectful answer.

Listen intently to each comment, letting students know their ideas are worthwhile.

Make class interesting, desirable, and worthwhile.

Compliment each student on good points remarks, performance.

Show interest in students as individuals.

Make sure students understand answers to questions.

Be at the door to greet students.

Ask students to help on any special project.

Have a happy, positive attitude, especially during class.

Build students' confidence in their ability to do assignments.

Know the subjects to be taught.

Call parent(s) to discuss positive things about student.

Send out progress reports.

Talk to student's other teachers.

Have a good sense of humor.

Start and stop on time.

Ask the students if there are any areas of study in which they would specifically be interested.

WAYS TO SHOW CARING

Avoid showing favoritism.

Be willing to spend extra time with students.

Give students opportunity to demonstrate talents.

Be appreciative of good class attitudes.

Ask students for suggestions on how to make class more interesting.

Draw shy students out carefully.

Explain failing grades to students, outlining steps for improvement.

Become personally acquainted with each student.

Tell the students to feel free to come and discuss problems with you anytime.

Greet students with a smile and converse with them when seeing them away from the school setting.

Make comments on students' papers.

Offer assistance, a listening concern, to students who have problems.

Instructional Techniques

Eliciting Active Participation

Ensure that students will learn more and retain learning longer by actively involving them in the learning. Research shows active participation increases learning by 20%.

Elicit covert "thinking" behavior. Although covert behavior cannot be seen or measured, it is a form of active participation for the student.

Allow three seconds between the teacher's question and student's answer. This provides an opportunity for students to have "mental rehearsal" time before answering aloud.

Use words such as imagine, recall, remember, think, visualize, suppose, and pretend to encourage covert behavior.

Elicit overt behavior, "visible" participation.

Try different patterns so the students will not know whose turn is next, but will ensure that every student has a chance to respond.

Call on the student after asking the question.

Send one or more students to the chalkboard while others work at their desks.

Call on students other than those with their hands up first.

Check name on a list of class members after each student's turn.

Have students respond at the same time so that the teacher can check for understanding on the part of all students, using the following methods:

Use individual chalkboards or magic slates.

Have students hold up answer cards or use finger signals (numerical code/thumbs up, thumbs down).

Have students work in pairs or small groups to check each other's answers or arrive at a mutual answer (either written or verbal to share with the class).

Select a quieter student as group leader to be certain of participation of all students.

ELICITING ACTIVE PARTICIPATION

Remember the saying:

When I hear, I forget.

When I see, I remember.

When I do, I learn.

See the Instructional Techniques section for the topics "Motivating Students" and "Reinforcing and Recognizing Students."

Instructing Students with Low Reading Skills

Determine and emphasize the critical attribute (what makes that learning different from other similar learnings) in order to help students understand the concept more completely.

Emphasize active participation, working with concrete objects, class discussions, small group work rather than using overwhelming amounts of written material.

> See Study Skills section of this manual for topics: "Working Independently," and "Completing Assignments in Class."

Consider requiring varying levels of cognitive understanding in assignments and in questions asked in class, based on students' abilities.

- For students whose abilities are limited, concentrate on the simpler levels (knowledge, comprehension, and application) of Benjamin Bloom's taxonomy.
- Lead students whose reading skills are poor to respond orally to higher level questions.
- For more capable students, require information which will foster creative thinking (analysis, synthesis, and evaluation).

Allow students to do as much oral work as possible, instead of requiring everything to be written: classwork, reports, tests.

Tape textbook material for students who experience difficulty with reading.

- Have another student do the taping.
- Allow students to use head sets to listen to the material while others are reading silently.
- Develop a schedule for listening to taped material.
  - Plan frequent breaks rather than requiring students to listen for long periods of time.

Have students underline all unfamiliar words in a reading passage.

- Have students use the words marked as new vocabulary words to learn.
- If certain words appear in the "unknown" list of several students, reteach them to the entire class.

Motivating Students

Determine the critical attribute of the learning (what makes it different from similar learnings) and state this clearly to students.

Use the anticipatory set to state clearly the learning, its purpose, its relationship to past and future learnings, and what is expected of the students.

Be excited about the subject at hand!

Request overt (visible) behavior from students as well as covert (thinking) behavior.

Utilize various teaching techniques.

Work one-to-one with students as needed.

Use unique, vivid, novel, even gimmicky approaches on occasion.

Change activities frequently.

Relate learning to everyday life.

Encourage students to share personal knowledge or interests on topics related to the subject at hand.

Explain to students the two types of motivation: extrinsic motivation and intrinsic motivation.

> Extrinsic motivation results in visible rewards, such as getting an A. Intrinsic motivation requires that students work hard just because they take pride in doing so.
>
> Help students move from extrinsic to intrinsic motivation.

Offer praise and encouragement.

Reward students who do their best.

> Rewards can be intangible as well as tangible.
> Examples would include: praising, posting papers, skipping a homework assignment, appointing as messenger.
> See section on "Reinforcing and Recognizing Students."

Employ the contract system to enhance motivation.

Have students keep individual charts to record their progress.

Assist students in meeting with success.

Use small groups or teams where students will be encouraged by their peers to assume responsibility.

Use bulletin boards, posters, colored chalk, room arrangement to increase student's interest level.

Employ body language, actions, and words to create a pleasant tone in the classroom.

Create sufficient anxiety to keep students alert and interested without inhibiting the learning.

Move about room while students are working.
Maintain eye contact with students.

Be sure the assignment is on the student's level.

Create assignments which are interesting to students.

Give assignments that are fun, occasionally (shade-ins, riddles, color-by-answer).

Make students accountable for a given learning/assignment by the close of the period.

Encourage independent studies or extra reports for students who wish to pursue a topic further.

Give immediate feedback to students on classwork, homework, and tests.
The faster the knowledge of results, the greater the learning will be.

Use ideas from Motivation, a periodic publication of the Jefferson County Teachers Association, Instruction and Professional Development Committee.

See Study Skills section of this manual for topics: "Completing Assignments in Class," "Completing Homework," "Giving Oral Directions," "Following Written Directions," and "Working Independently."

See the Coping Skills section of this manual for the topic "Building Self-Concept."

Providing for Retention

Increase retention by making the material meaningful (related to everyday life).

Ensure that the original concept is comprehended in order to facilitate retention.

- Be certain students understand the concept being taught.
- Check periodically throughout the lesson to be sure students are following the lesson.

Provide practice (both in and out of class) that will increase retention.

- Plan homework which will review skills learned that day.
- Periodically review skills previously presented.
- Use the anticipatory set (a statement of the learning expected, its relationship to previous and future learnings, why students need to learn it, and how they are going to be held accountable for it).

- Teach to both sides of the brain (hemisphericity).
  - Include visual and auditory stimuli.
  - Engage students in both overt (visible) and covert (thinking) behavior.
  - See topic "Eliciting Active Participation" in the section, Instructional Techniques.

Link new learning to similar old learning to increase positive transfer and retention.

Use tunes of popular songs, changing words to be appropriate for material to memorize.

Remember, according to research by Herman Ebbinghaus:

On the average, we retain--

10% of what we read
20% of what we hear
30% of what we see
50% of what we see and hear
70% of what we say
and
90% of what we say as we do a thing.

Reinforcing and Recognizing Students

Know students to determine which type of reinforcers work best on an individual basis.

- Remember that some students do not like to be touched, others thrive on it; some students work well with verbal praise; others need tangible rewards.

Recognize students for specific accomplishments.

- Remember that for some students recognition can be frightening/embarrassing, and they may attempt to sabotage the effort.

Reward and reinforce students for even the smallest accomplishment.

Praise students for completing a task even if it is not completely correct.

Display papers which show the best efforts of students, even if they are not perfect.

Employ a point system.

- Encourage students to compete against themselves rather than others in the class.

Consider a different grading system for special education students which would give them a specific number of points with which to begin, similar to a handicap in bowling or golf.

Separate grades for content and mechanics.

Have students chart their own progress.

Use the buddy system or peer tutors to enhance the learning of slower students and to provide positive reinforcement for the other students.

Let a student who does not function well above concrete thinking be the one who writes spelling words or math problems on the board while others dictate the process.

Give free time or the privilege of skipping a homework assignment as a reward.

Allow students to do special jobs for the teacher.

Ask parents to provide rewards at home which teachers would be unable to provide at school (a new game, a camping trip, a favorite dinner).

Remember, for some students, the greatest reinforcement possible could be time alone with the teacher.

REINFORCING AND RECOGNIZING STUDENTS

Have a bag or box filled with little "prizes" for selection by students who need (and deserve) tangible rewards. These can be free items given by various companies (banks, hotels, restaurants, telephone company) as promotional materials or ones found in cereal boxes.

> Consider purchasing other items for minimal amounts at yard sales, during school supply sales in the fall, as multi-packaged party favors, or from companies producing such "rewards."

See Coping Skills section for the topic "Building Self-Concept."

See the Study Skills section of this manual for topics: "Completing Assignments in Class," "Completing Homework," and "Working Independently."

Study Skills

Alphabetizing Words

Relate the need for using alphabetical order in everyday life (dictionaries, encyclopedias, telephone directories, glossaries, card catalogues, indexes).

Have the alphabet posted in the classroom for student reference.

Consider having students make a copy to keep in their notebooks/folders. If needed, place alphabet strips across the top of students' desks.

Teach students to say the alphabet backwards as quickly as they can forward. It is the same principle used in math when students are taught to count backwards. This decreases time needed to alphabetize words or find items listed alphabetically.

Use a familiar alphabet song at the outset.

Have races among students to see who can say the alphabet the fastest.

Review with students how words are alphabetized when they have the same beginning letter(s).

Have students alphabetize vocabulary/spelling words.

Have students put things that interest them in alphabetical order: names of classmates, titles of television shows, or names of video games.

Give students a list of words and the guide words from a hypothetical dictionary page. Have them alphabetize only those words which would appear on the given page.

Assigning Long-Range Projects

Specify assignments and objective.

- Go over expectations and examples with students in class.
- Provide study sheet with specific directions to which they (and their parent[s]) may refer.
- Provide step-by-step directions for completing the project.

Guide students in selecting appropriate topic/project based on their abilities.

- Encourage slower students to choose topics/projects that can be easily researched/constructed.
- Consider assigning a specific project to each student based on his/her ability and interests.

Provide check points.

- Post a time line on board/wall for continual reference.
- Let students use this checklist to keep them on target.
  (For slower students, who may never have had the opportunity to do a long-range project, such directions are essential.)
- Have specific portions of the project due for teacher review on given dates. Hence, students will not be able to put off the project until the last minute. This check also provides the teacher with a means of assisting those students who are experiencing difficulty without causing embarassment.

Send a memo to parent(s) at the beginning of the year/unit/grading period, indicating the content to be covered and any long-range project assignments to be completed. Ask parent(s) to sign and return the memo.

Use a buddy system! Some students will more readily ask a peer for assistance.

Assign group projects. This strategy allows weaker students to be grouped with more capable ones and to learn from them.

See Study Skills section for the topic: "Working Independently."

See the Instructional Techniques section for topics: "Motivating Students" and "Reinforcing and Recognizing Students." See the Coping Skills section for the topic "Lessening Student Dependency."

Assigning Reports

Be certain students know the expectations in writing or presenting a report.

Teach paraphrasing.

> Do samples of a given paragraph from an encyclopedia.
> Demonstrate that students can use a variety of ways to state the same information in their own words.

Allow students to select their own topics based on personal interest from a teacher-made list of potential topics.

Separate grades for content and mechanics.

Encourage typing if handwriting is difficult.

Allow students to use notes, read or tape record a report to the class if extemporaneous speaking is difficult.

Model the various steps required in writing a report (notetaking, outlining, footnoting, compiling a bibliography and title page, writing a conclusion). Provide class time for practicing these skills.

Provide students with a sample report for reference to illustrate correct procedures.

Designate check-points for each portion of the report to be submitted for teacher approval.

See the topics: "Improving Reference Skills," "Taking Notes," "Organizing by Outlining," "Summarizing for Understanding," and "Assigning Long-Range Projects" in this (Study Skills) section.

Categorizing Data

Explain to students the logic of putting items in categories (clothing, grocery store shelving, career fields).

Give students a category and have them list items which belong in it.

> Make category appropriate for subject area (insects, parts of speech, math words).

Have students categorize concrete objects by shape, color, use.

Give students a list of words. Have them name the categories and place the words under the correct headings.

Read a list which contains two or three items that do not belong to a given category. Have students name each item, state the category in which it belongs, and tell why the item does/does not belong. Have visual copy provided for students.

Have students list all items in their lockers and categorize them.

Read students a list of items in a category. See how many they can remember.

Have students categorize material studied in order to facilitate studying for tests: who, what, when, where; persons, places, things.

Play "Categories."

> The teacher names a category appropriate to class study. Students, in rhythm, must name items in that category without repeating something already named.

Completing Assignments in Class

Begin class with an anticipatory set (a statement of the learning expected, its relationship to previous and future learnings, the need for learning it, and the manner in which they are going to be held accountable). This procedure will enable students to know exactly what the lesson concerns and what is expected. It can also be used to excite students about the learning at hand.

Relate the assignments to real-life situations to enhance enthusiasm for learning and retention of material covered.

Be sure students understand the directions.

- Teach direction words and phrases.
- See this section (Study Skills) for topics "Giving Oral Directions" and "Following Written Directions."

Use guided practice.

- Model the learning activity for students.
- Give samples of work expected, how problems are to be set up, and other aids.

Work one-to-one with students who need additional instruction or help in completing the assignment.

Be sure assignment is reasonable for completion in one class period. An assignment which is too lengthy may overwhelm the student, cause frustration, poor self-concept, and inappropriate behavior such as doing work hurriedly. If assignment is too long, students may hurry to finish and not do a thorough job.

Allow students occasionally to check their own or others' papers from answers written on overhead or chalkboard.

Have students use assignment notebook to note class assignments and directions.

Assign incomplete work for homework to be returned next day.

Use a reward system for students who complete assignments on time.

- Place names in jar to draw for a prize.
- Pay "salary" with play money, which can be used to buy free time, a privilege, or some reward.

COMPLETING ASSIGNMENTS IN CLASS

Give ample verbal praise to those who try their best, even if they show only improvement rather than perfection.

Consider adjusting the assignment for exceptional child education or functioning primarily at the concrete levels.

> Lessen the amount to be completed or the depth of answer required so student may experience success.

Use the buddy system to assist slower students in being successful. This activity provides an ego-boost and sense of helping another for the student who serves as a buddy.

Group for different assignments, if needed.

> Expect more/better quality from students functioning at higher levels. Allow slower students to do less in order to lower frustration and to encourage them to do a good job on a realistic amount of work.

Consider having students submit class assignments weekly rather than daily to teach organizational skills and time-budgeting. This allows students to spend extra time to complete their work correctly and successfully.

Consider providing background music to create a relaxed atmosphere.

See topics: "Working Independently" and "Copying from the Chalkboard."

See the Coping Skills section of this manual for the topic: "Lessening Student Dependency."

See the Instructional Techniques section for topics: "Providing for Retention," "Motivating Students," and "Reinforcing and Recognizing Students."

Completing Homework

Remember, in Jefferson County Public Schools, homework is one of the seven areas which constitute 65-75% of the grade for middle school students! The other areas are participation, class assignments, note-taking, discussion, quizzes, and special projects. This is Jefferson County Pubic Schools policy which all teachers are expected to follow in order to be equitable in grading students. Giving only one or two assignments per grading period is not a fair way to establish this portion of students' grades.

Be sure to assign homework. It is essential for slower students.

It provides the extra practice needed to master a skill that cannot be learned with classwork alone. It reinforces skills taught previously which need periodic review. It is recommended that when applicable students be assigned homework every night.

Give simple assignments at first.

Allow students to get in the routine of doing homework and meeting with success.
Expect the positive feelings established to carry over as assignments become more challenging.

Let homework be the completion of unfinished classwork. This is especially beneficial for less academic students who can then work at a slower pace and do a competent job, rather than hurry to finish and perform poorly.

Be certain students understand how to do the assignment.

Have specific directions written on the work sheets.
Do a sample item with the class.
Give students time to begin and check to be sure they are working correctly.
Never give assignments that have not been thoroughly covered in classwork.

Review the assignment with students just prior to class dismissal.

Use work sheets with specific directions to prevent students from forgetting what pages in the book are assigned or not remembering the oral directions.

Make homework short, relevant, reasonable, and related to classwork.

State consequences for not submitting homework.

Present this statement in written form for parent(s)' signature.
Post the consequences in the classroom.
Follow through on consequences; possible consequences include: time-out, detention, reporting to counselor's office, lowering of grade.

Notify parent(s) of the frequency of homework and the consequences of not completing it. (See sample letter "Homework Notification," page 51.) Touch base occasionally with parent(s) to determine if there are reasons homework is not completed.

Have parent(s) sign homework in order to--

Involve the home in the educational process.
Alert parents to subject matter being covered in class.
Give parents the opportunity to work with their child on areas of difficulty.

Have parent(s) send written excuse if homework is to be late or incomplete.

Have students who frequently fail to turn in homework call their parent(s) with the teacher present to explain missing assignments and resulting lowered grade.

Give students a choice of which assignment to complete; this option may encourage some students to do work they might not otherwise do.

Be sure the choices are equitable and reinforce classwork.
Give extra credit for completing more than one of the assignments. Thus, students who care, but who are having a hard time, are afforded the opportunity to bring up their grades.

Include assignments that are fun, such as riddles, games, shade-ins, and seek-and-finds.

Fun assignments reinforce the mastery of skills but are usually more enjoyable than traditional work sheets.

Encourage students to have assignment pocket notebooks which they carry from class to class. Students write homework assignments and due dates for long-range projects in them.

Post a listing of regular weekly assignments.

COMPLETING HOMEWORK

Encourage students to establish a quiet spot at home in which to do homework. This will help them to be less distracted by others/TV and will enhance the importance of doing homework.

Grade and return homework as quickly as possible.

- If students don't receive their work, they cannot learn from their mistakes.
- If students feel the teacher is not grading their papers, the "why bother?" attitude will appear.

Have students resubmit assignments after they have corrected them.

This procedure reinforces proper mastery of the skill and gives students a chance to raise their grades.

Assign occasionally a given number of minutes of reading as homework rather than written work. (Verify the completion of this assignment by asking for parental signature on a note.)

Provide answers on overhead or chalkboard for self-checking of homework or checking by another student.

Reward students for doing homework. Although homework is required, a reward is still a nice touch. It provides an incentive for completing the task. Possible rewards might include: praising verbally, posting of work, allowing student to skip a night but receive credit, sending student on errands.

Have students keep a graph or chart. Shade in one section for each finished assignment. Completed graph or chart may be exchanged for a reward.

Place students' names in jar when completed homework is submitted. Draw for a prize on a designated day.

Duplicate copies of money to use in paying students for their work. Let them buy free time or a prize when a set amount is accumulated.

Involve parent(s) by suggesting that they reward their student with treats at home that are determined in advance (eating out, staying up later on weekends, going skating, receiving a new game).

Reward quality, not quantity.

Employ the buddy system, allowing less able student to call a partner (stronger student) for assistance.

COMPLETING HOMEWORK

Make students aware of the Homework Hotline.

Provide its phone number for them.
Encourage them to use it.

Assign homework by departments. For example: On Mondays all social studies teachers assign homework; on Tuesdays all math teachers assign homework; on Wednesdays all science teachers assign homework. This provides students with only one or two assignments per night instead of overwhelming them with four or five, creating a feeling of "It's impossible--so why bother?"

Notify parents of the schedule so they can check to be sure assignments are completed and know what to expect.

See Coping Skills section of this manual for topic: "Lessening Student Dependency."

Copying from the Chalkboard

Use copying in limited amounts as it is time-consuming for teacher and for students. Some students cannot copy with speed and accuracy; therefore, they feel frustrated, and a poor self-concept and inappropriate behaviors are promoted. Students with inappropriate or no correction for nearsightedness will be penalized.

File work sheets for further use and let students use them in studying for tests.

Use vocabulary/spelling words for reinforcement.

Write in brief phrases and statements rather than long sentences.

Giving Oral Directions

Emphasize the objective of the day.

Ensure eye contact with students when giving directions.

Place new or difficult terms on the chalkboard and discuss them prior to giving directions.

Use pictures or simple drawings to illustrate the directions when applicable.

Sequence directions in order of process/importance.

Give directions in one or two steps at a time. Such instructions as--

> "Get out your science book and turn to Chapter 5 and read pages 45-48 and turn to page 53 and answer questions 1-6," will frustrate many students and promote a poor self-concept and inappropriate behaviors.
>
> Build from one or two steps to three, then to four, and so forth as students show mastery at each level.

Use key words (first, next, then, finally) and tell students to listen for them.

> Overemphasize them at first to enhance their importance.
> Have students make key word dictionary for personal reference.

Repeat directions for students who have short-term memory.

Have students repeat the directions to the teacher in their own words.

Model first item for students to be sure they understand how to follow the directions by writing on the chalkboard or overhead.

Check during guided practice to be sure students understand and are following directions.

Have specific directions written out for students who are visually oriented or for all students throughout the class period as a quick reference.

> At least, list page/question/problem/numbers on the board.

Have students jot down key words, page numbers, problem/question numbers for later reference.

> Model several examples for students.

GIVING ORAL DIRECTIONS

Tape record the directions so students may listen to them again without disrupting others.

Relate the ability to follow directions to life skills.

See the topic "Working Independently" in this section (Study Skills).

See Coping Skills section of this manual for the topic: "Lessening Student Dependency."

Improving Listening/Attending Skills

Define a "good listener" to students as one who sits quietly, looks at the speaker, and pays attention.

Do not repeat information too often or students will tune the teacher out the first time, knowing that he/she will repeat.

Call on students at random. This technique forces them to pay attention, knowing they could be next.

> See the section Instructional Techniques for the topic "Active Participation."

Ask the question before calling on a specific student.

Read a list of words to the class and have students write as many as they can remember.

> Use categories.
> Use unrelated items.

Stand behind students to speak.

Whisper when talking to the class.

Have student repeat what the teacher or another student has just said.

Teach students to focus on signal or key words.

> Overemphasize them at first for students' benefit.
> Stress important words: now, then, next, first, also, and before.

Change activities frequently to keep interest level high.

Play auditory memory games.

> "Gossip"--Students sit in a circle. The first one whispers a subject-related statement to the second, who whispers it to the third. Continue this procedure until all have heard the statement. The last student says aloud what the statement was to compare it with what was said at the beginning.

> "Categories"--The teacher names a category appropriate to class study. Students, in rhythm, must name items in that category without repeating something already named.

Read/tape short stories.

> Discuss orally.
> Have students answer written questions.

IMPOROVING LISTENING/ATTENDING SKILLS

Read the first part of a short mystery story to the class. Ask students to determine the clue to solving the mystery.

Allow students to tape class lectures/discussions for study at home.

Consider using commercially prepared materials.

Consider using a partial or complete outline of the lecture/presentation. Students could fill in or check off portions of the outline. (An outline will assist students in following the lecture/presentation.)

Improving Reference Skills

Teach reference skills. Students may not have mastered them in elementary school, especially if they needed to spend a great deal of time on basic math and reading skills.

Review with students the procedure for using a thesaurus, atlas, almanac, dictionary, encyclopedia, and card catalog.

Review with students the procedure for using an index, glossary, table of contents, bibliography, footnotes, and appendices.

Compare the encyclopedia and dictionary.

Explain the similarities: alphabetical listing, guide words, definitions.
Explain the differences: more involved explanations in encyclopedia, topics vs. words.

Work with students in learning how to read maps, charts, tables, and graphs. Although they have been exposed to these in elementary school, they will be presented more complex ones in middle school.

Review with students the common symbols found on maps.
Show students how to use the key, if one is provided.
Have one student explain to the class how to "read" the particular key presented.
Check each student's first response to the questions to be answered to ensure that he/she understands how to use that particular graph, chart, table, or map.

Have students draw a map of an imaginary country, including rivers, mountain ranges, and other landmarks. Ask them to create a key and questions about their maps. Let them exchange maps and have other students answer the questions.

Assign a similar activity with charts, tables, or graphs.

Solicit help from the media center specialist.

See the topic "Alphabetizing Words."

Organizing by Outlining

Teach outlining by categorizing.

Give students a group of concrete objects, pictures, or list of items which fall into several categories.

Have students determine the correct category and place the appropriate items in it.

Show students how to place the categories under the Roman numerals of an outline and the appropriate items with the letters and numerals.

Use the same items to categorize differently and come up with another outline. (Categorize by use, shape, color, and size.)

See section on "Categorizing."

Teach outlining by using a story.

Help students select the main idea of each paragraph of the story. These become the Roman numeral items.

Then use the supporting/pertinent information from each paragraph as sub-topics listed beside the letters and numerals.

Teach outlining by having the students take notes on material they have read.

Encourage students to first skim a passage.

Show students how to make the bold print, underlined, large-type, or italicized words into Roman numeral topics.

Then place supporting data under each heading as the letters and numerals.

See topics: "Taking Notes" and "Skimming Written Materials."

Work with students on constructing a series of paragraphs from an outline.

Have students use the Roman numeral ideas to write their topic sentences.

Demonstrate the use of lettered and numbered items as supporting evidence for the main idea of each paragraph.

Divide students into small groups, having each group write a paragraph from the same outline in order to show students that a variety of correct paragraphs can be constructed from the same outline.

Consider providing an outline of an oral lecture/presentation for demonstration.

Reasoning Deductively

Give examples of cause and effect in everyday life.

Show students how to check the logic of their work.
Examples:

Can one in fact get from A to D without going through B and C?

Can one have more money than one started with if some has been spent?

Can there be fewer cookies in three batches than there were in the first batch?

Can sports stars be successful if they don't practice, rest, eat properly, study in school?

Read the first part of a short mystery story to the class.

See if students can pinpoint the clue to solving it.

Discuss possible answers with students, having them explain why a given fact is or is not pertinent and what outcome it indicates.

Use the example of a wrong answer to a question to determine how/why it is not the correct one.

Model for students how you reached that conclusion.

Give them other examples to support in a similar manner.

Use real-life situations to model how one can learn from personal mistakes.

See section "Sequencing Events."

Sequencing Events

Explain the necessity of sequencing in everyday life, doing things in an orderly fashion rather than in a time-consuming haphazard manner.

Consider using the word ordering when explaining sequencing.

Do a task analysis of a simple skill with the class to show sequencing.

Cut out comic strips and have students place them in sequential order, perhaps allowing them to fill in the characters' dialogue.

Read a short story. Have students sequence the events.

Give students scrambled words/sentences/paragraphs and have them unscramble and arrange into a sentence/paragraph/story.

Assign the sequencing of events for "getting ready for school," "the day at school," or "when I get home."

Let students sequence the events in the life of a famous person in chronological order.

Give students a list of events. Assign sequencing them into a story.

Tell students key words for which to look: before, after, then, next, first, last, third, prior to.

Make a list of key words for inclusion in their notebooks.

Ask students to provide examples of sequence in everyday life, e.g., baseball series; hours, days, months, years; birth, infancy, childhood, teenage, adulthood, old age, death; seasons.

Skimming Written Material

Explain skimming to students.

Relate it to a rock skipping across the water. This process of reading will enable students to work faster and find answers more readily.

Teach skimming, using the following sequential activities.

Have students read the questions to be answered prior to looking at the passage.

These serve as clues regarding important points which need to be remembered or highlighted.

Instruct students to read the first and last paragraphs of a nonfiction selection.

Explain that the first paragraph is the introduction and the last is the summary.

Have students read the first and the last sentence of each paragraph. These sentences will help students pinpoint the paragraphs in which specific facts can be located.

Allow students to answer as many of the questions as they can, skipping those of which they are uncertain.

Identify key words for unanswered questions. By ascertaining the key words, students have clues for which to look.

Have students skim the passage again, looking for those key words in order to locate the answers.

Encourage students to answer the remaining questions.

Begin teaching this process with short passages and simple questions.

Summarizing for Understanding

Teach summarizing skills by having students complete the following sequential activities.

Skim the passage.

- Be sure students have already mastered this skill.
- See the topic "Skimming Written Material."

Write/list key points.

- Have students brainstorm all important points without evaluating them.
- List these on the chalkboard or overhead projector.
- Combine similar key points, pointing out relationships.

Drop unimportant points by crossing out/erasing insignificant ideas on list.

Read list aloud.

- Check for accuracy of key points.

Condense further.

- Combine or cross out any other appropriate points.

List the remaining key points in sequence.

- Be certain students know how to sequence.
- See section on "Sequencing."

Write a paragraph from numbered key points.

- Write as students dictate.
- Have students write their own paragraphs.

Taking Notes

Remember that in the middle schools of Jefferson County notetaking is one of the seven areas that constitute 65-75% of students' grades. (The other areas are participation, homework, class assignments, discussion, quizzes, and special projects.)

Use notetaking to help student to:

Focus on essential information, whether written or oral.

Reduce the quantity of material to review in studying for tests.

Organize information to write reports.

Remind students that notes, unlike summaries, are key words or brief phrases, not complete sentences, and are similar to lists.

Teach notetaking skills by having students do the following sequential activities:

Have students read the material or listen to the lecture or film.

Instruct students to look/listen for clues as to what is important, rather than focusing on what interests them; this technique will save time in notetaking as well as in studying.

Have them look for signals given by authors through the use of bold type, italics, asterisks, and numbered or listed items.

Make them aware of oral signals given through voice quality, repetition of terms, and listed items.

List key items.

Order them sequentially.

Encourage highlighting if the book is personally owned.

Circle important words within items.

Include only those which are necessary for recall and understanding.

Help students to make notes as short and concise as possible.

Encourage students to develop their own method of shorthand.

Star the most important items.

Emphasize that this technique reduces the information to essentials and makes the job of studying realistic and profitable.

Rewrite notes in correct order to help make the notes neat, understandable, concise and easier to study.

As students become more proficient in notetaking, rewriting should become less necessary.

After establishing basic notetaking skills, provide numerous opportunities for students to practice notetaking from lectures, discussions, and reading assignments.

Use bold-face headings as topics/questions, using the printed matter following them for supporting data.

Have a capable student make a carbon copy of class notes to be shared with absentees or students who need special help.

See section on "Improving Listening/Attending Skills."

Teaching Test Taking

Remember, Jefferson County Public Schools' policy states that tests are only 25-35% of the grade in middle schools.

Teach students how to study for tests.

Most of the tests students had in elementary school were on math computation, comprehension, and spelling. The most common type of comprehension test was multiple choice.

See section on "Types of Tests."

Employ a variety of tests: essay, fill-in-the-blanks, true/false, word problems, matching, definitions, multiple choice, listing, computation, spelling, vocabulary, comprehension, open book.

Prepare the test prior to teaching the material to ensure that all test items are thoroughly covered in the lessons.

Tell students what type of test to expect before they study for it.

State problems/questions clearly.

Avoid the use of extreme qualifiers: never, always, all.

Be sure students understand the directions given on the test.

Encourage students to read the entire test before starting.

The teacher may want to read it through with the class.

Check students' first response to be certain they understand directions.

Encourage students to answer first the items for which they are certain of their response.

May help students increase the number of correct answers.

Increases positive attitude for tackling harder questions.

Consider placing time limits on each section of the test.

Helps slower students pace themselves so that they complete the majority of the test questions.

Prevents a student from getting bogged down on, or overdoing, one section of the test and not completing the rest.

Allow students time to proofread their test answers.

Consider making adaptations of tests for special education students.

Perhaps the resource or special education teacher could administer the test orally during that same class period.

Note that these students may need additional time to complete the test.

Rewrite the test with simplified vocabulary.

Adapt grading criteria to require less detailed responses.

Grade primarily for content.

Consider taping the directions and test questions for some students to use with earphones if it is possible that they know the material but will be unable to read all of the items correctly. Or, have a student aide read the test to the student and write that student's responses.

Move around the room during test.

Offer encouragement to students.

Deter cheating with physical presence.

Look at specific test items again if the majority of the class does poorly on them or on the test as a whole.

Consider not counting those items which caused the greatest difficulty.

Note that perhaps the question(s) was not stated clearly or the fact had not been presented sufficiently for students to understand fully.

Notify parent(s) of testing schedule and material to be covered, so they can help and reinforce at home.

Choose test items from homework or class assignments.

Do not present any surprises on the test.

Be sure all items have been taught adequately prior to testing.

Use vocabulary words daily in class to ensure students' understanding of them.

Review important material in homework assigned just prior to the test.

Have students write and submit potential test questions to help students select the information that is important for them to study.

Use some of the questions on the test.

Let students take the exact test they have individually constructed.

Have students take notes on the material on which they are to be tested.

Encourage students to study their comprehensive notes before taking the test.

See the topic "Taking Notes."

Have students outline the material to be covered on the test.

Give students a partially completed outline to complete while studying.

Allow students to construct individual outlines.

As a class or in small groups, have students compare their outlines for important points/lists.

Encourage students to use the outlines in studying for the test.

See the topic "Organizing by Outlining."

Give the answer and have students supply the question.

Have students create questions from each bold-faced heading in their textbook for use as study guides.

Give students extra credit on a test if they hand in their study notes. This encourages them to make/take notes to have available for studying.

Institute test days by subject area throughout the school.

For example, on Mondays math teachers test, on Tuesdays science teachers give tests, thus, preventing students from having several tests to study for on one night.

Notify parent(s) of the school testing schedule so they can check on, and help, students to study at home for tests.

Have students write a summary for each chapter/section/topic to be covered on the test.

As a class or in small groups, have students combine their summaries into one comprehensive summary.

Encourage students to study their summaries before the test.

See the topic "Summarizing for Understanding."

Teaching Types of Tests

Select a different type of test each time: matching, spelling, true/false, fill-in-the-blank, computation, vocabulary, essay, listing, multiple-choice, word problems, comprehension, open book, definitions.

Provide practice tests of each type to be certain students understand how to do them.

Give a variety of tests.

Teach students how to take tests.

Tell students to answer questions they know first and then to go back to the others.

Encourage students to make a "best guess" rather than leaving any item blank.

Teach students to look for signal words on math word problem tests: how much more, all together, are left.

Consider making a chart of these signals to post in the room or to place in students' notebooks.

Teach process of elimination for use on multiple choice, matching, and fill-in-the-blanks.

Tell students to answer first those questions of which they are certain.

Show students how to go through remaining answers to eliminate nonsensical ones.

Reason aloud with them to determine which of the remaining choices sound logical and which do not.

As a last resort, encourage students to make a "best guess."

Teach concepts "all of the above" and "none of these" for multiple-choice tests.

Tell students to mark a statement "false" on a true/false test if it is only partially true.

Give students true/false statements for practice, and in a group discussion point out why a statement is true or false.

Show students how to look for key words such as always, never, rarely in true/false statements.

Teach appropriate responses to terms commonly found on essay tests: analyze, compare, contrast, define, describe, demonstrate, develop, evaluate, explain, illustrate, interpret, list, justify, outline, prove, relate, summarize, trace.

Thinking Creatively

Have students imagine what it would be like to be a baby; live on the moon; travel in another country; to have lived in the 1800's; or to have been present at a specific historical event.

Discuss the selected topic with class input.

Write the ideas on the chalkboard.

Have students use these and other personal concepts to write a paragraph/story.

Give "what if" assignments.

What if the sky were red? What if we didn't have electricity? What if the United States were not free?

Work in pairs or small groups.

Brainstorming helps the flow of ideas and gives weaker students good models.

Consider not requiring sentences/paragraphs, just thoughts.

This prevents students from getting bogged down in proper grammatical structure and fosters creativity.

Ideas in our minds are not usually in complete sentences or sequenced in logical order.

Be sure assignments/questions lead students beyond the levels of simple knowledge (verbatim feedback), comprehension, and application to the higher thinking skills of analysis, synthesis, and evaluation (Bloom's Taxonomy).

Have students illustrate concepts being discussed.

Give creative writing assignments.

Encourage oral presentations, planned and extemporaneous.

Using Work Sheets

Use work sheets instead of having students copy from the chalkboard.

See the topic "Writing Directions."

Teach direction words: underline, cross out, circle, find the difference, rewrite.

Have students make dictionary of direction words for personal reference.

Be certain work sheets are on the appropriate level for students.

Use legible work sheets.

State the objective of each work sheet clearly.

Keep the number of items on one page to a minimum.

This will lessen frustration for slower or easily distracted students who may feel the volume makes the task impossible to accomplish.

Consider assigning such students only a portion of the page at a time. When the first part is completed, give them the next.

Be certain directions are stated clearly and sequentially on each work sheet.

Read directions aloud to students.

See the topic "Giving Oral Directions."

Ask questions to determine if directions and procedure are understood.

Have students paraphrase the procedure.

Do not merely ask if there are any questions.

Check students' first response to ensure that they understand what to do and how to do it correctly.

If directions are multiple (underline this, cross out that, circle something else), consider giving students who easily get confused three (or more) copies of the same sheet with instructions to do one direction on each sheet.

Assign work sheets to help study for a test, with blanks or outlines to be filled in by students.

Encourage students to make a folder/notebook of completed work sheets to use for review and in studying for a test.

USING WORK SHEETS

Give work sheets that are for fun occasionally: math riddles, color-by-answer, surprise endings.

Keep copies of all work sheets for teacher's file.

Give work sheets from earlier in the year for completion as homework or classwork to check for retention of learning.

See the topic "Working Independently."

See the section Instructional Techniques for the topic "Instructing Students with Low Reading Skills"; see the section Coping Skills for the topics "Decreasing the Fear of Making Errors" and "Lessening Student Dependency."

Utilizing Sponge Activities

"Soak up" time and noise at the beginning or end of a class period by using sponge activities, either written or oral.

Consider giving extra credit for sponges done before class actually starts.

Use sponges for review, enrichment, post testing, pretesting, or self-checking on assignments.

Make sponges short, interesting, and effective, but do not overuse.

Examples of sponges include:

List the continents of the world.

Make ten five-letter words from "Happy Halloween."

Be ready to name all students in your row.

Count the number of words in the Pledge of Allegiance.

How are these numerals sequenced?

8-5-4-9-1-7-6-3-2-0

Unscramble vocabulary words.

Working Independently

Provide guided practice (work through sample questions/problems with students) prior to students' working independently.

Be certain that students understand directions.

- Write pertinent information (page/question/problem numbers) on board for quick reference.

- After students begin, check to determine that they are doing the assignment correctly.

- See the topics "Giving Oral Directions," "Writing Directions," and "Completing Assignments in Class."

Allow students to ask questions when working independently, to reduce frustration caused by uncertainty.

Give one-on-one assistance to those students who need the extra explanation and reinforcement.

Move around the classroom while students are working independently.

- Encourage, verbally or physically (e.g., smile, pat on the back), those students who are doing well.

- Offer assistance to those who are experiencing difficulty.

- Not that this contact provides a means of helping students who might be too embarrassed to ask for assistance otherwise.

- Be sure that students do not spend the entire period doing an assignment incorrectly.

Employ self-checking materials which provide immediate feedback to students and require only simple answers.

Use the buddy system.

- Reassure slower students and give reinforcement to higher-functioning students with the exchange of benefits between buddies.

Develop contracts with students which specify what is to be accomplished during a given period of time.

- State and follow through on rewards/consequences for completion/incompletion of contract.

Prepare taped lessons for certain students to use.

Make a concise summary of the material to be learned with specific directions for the work required, avoiding lengthy abstractions.

Allow student to listen to the tape several times as needed for the completion of the assignment.

Plan a special study skills period, to be held daily during homeroom or weekly during a non-academic elective period, for those students who are exhibiting difficulty with organizational skills, completion of assignments, or other basic skills needed for success in middle school.

See the section Coping Skills for the topics "Lessening Student Dependency" and "Decreasing the Fear of Making Errors;" see the section Instructional Techniques for the topics: "Motivating Students" and "Instructing Students with Low Reading Skills."

Writing Directions

Be specific.

Use key words: first, then, next, finally.

Tell students to look for key words.

Be certain they know how to use the key words.

Have students make a key-word dictionary for personal directions.

Write directions in brief phrases and statements rather than long sentences.

Sequence directions in order of importance/process to be used; emphasize the importance of reading all the directions before beginning the process.

Have students paraphrase orally the directions.

Read directions aloud or provide a tape recording of them for students who are auditorially oriented.

Check the first response to be certain students are following the directions successfully.

Reward students for following directions correctly.

Teach students how to follow directions.

Begin by reading, talking through, and doing samples with the students.

Then explain only first half of the directions to the class. When that is mastered, leave the students on their own to read and follow directions.

Have students assemble necessary materials, isolate the various parts of the directions, and sequence their actions prior to beginning the assignment.

Use written directions for daily class assignment to clarify the objectives of the lesson and to prompt on-task behavior.

Give an assignment which will be fun for students.

Provide students with a sheet of written directions to follow. (Put a yellow star in the upper left corner; write your name in the right margin.)

Instruct students to read all directions before beginning a step. Then have the following statement as the last direction: Do only number three and turn in your paper.

WRITING DIRECTIONS

Write unique directions occasionally to encourage students to always read directions.

"Do only the odd-numbered problems."
"Answer five of the ten questions."

Relate to real-life situations to enhance enthusiasm for learning.

Insist on perfection in following directions.

See the topics "Working Independently" and "Sequencing Events."

Coping Skills

Adjusting to Several Different Teachers

Explain to students that each teacher is an individual, as is each of the students.

Each teacher will have different personality traits, mannerisms, requirements, and expectations.

Define specific classroom expectations.

Be honest and open with the students.

Tell them something about yourself.

Post expectations for learning and behavior.

State clearly what will and will not be tolerated in the classroom.

Encourage students to keep pocket notebooks in which to record assignments/requirements.

Include teachers' names and room numbers on schedule cards.

Conduct a scavenger hunt. Prepare a list of questions that require students to identify key personnel by name, position, responsibilities, and room number.

See the topic "Relating to People" in this section.

Budgeting Break Time

Review with students the types of things that they must accomplish between class periods.

Explain to students the consequences of being tardy to class.

Encourage students to organize their time and materials so that trips to their lockers are minimal.

Consider allowing highly disorganized students to have space to keep some materials in the classroom.

Provide sponges for break time.

Give one question and answer daily. Use these questions on a test.

Give review questions/problems for extra credit.

See the Study Skills section of this manual for the topic "Utilizing Sponge Activities."

See the Coping Skills section for the topic "Moving Through the Halls."

Building Self-Concept

Provide a variety of activities in which the students can meet success.

State academic and behavioral expectations in order to ensure students' understanding of a task to be accomplished.

Allow students to help plan learning and activities.

Point out accomplishments rather than mistakes.

Show personal interest in students, their hobbies, their problems.

Share personal feelings and ideas with students.

Learn students' names as soon as possible.

Give students special responsibilities, such as tutoring other students, doing bulletin boards, being a messenger.

Use awards or notes to make students feel special or to give them special honors. (See Communication section of this manual.)

Welcome positive statements made by other students.

Discuss emotional changes, so that students realize they are not alone and that many new feelings are acceptable.

Have each student write three things most admired in various classmates and suggest using those as personal goals for the year.

Have the students tell one thing they like about another student and share those feelings with the class.

Have a "Student of the Day/Week" to whom the others write positive letters stating what they like about the selected student.

Feature one student each week on a bulletin board.

Teach students to be aware of the negative and the positive statements they make.

Have students chart the number of positive and the number of negative statements made during a specific time in order to help them eliminate the negative ones.

Initiate peer tutoring or a buddy system to provide encouragement for weaker students and to give reinforcement to more capable students.

Make tasks reasonable for students

Reward even the smallest improvement.

Coping with Problems from Home

Be aware that problems at home often affect school work.

Note when a student's work changes drastically.

Watch for changes in personality, attention span, coping skills.

Make these observations to the student in the hope of establishing confidence for sharing and receiving possible help.

Be available to listen to students' problems.

Encourage students to share with a teacher or counselor.

Take an interest in them as individuals.

Conduct discussions of specific common problems.

Consider using the Innerchange Circle Kit. (Check your school media center or regional office for a copy.)

Keep in touch with parents to determine if there are unusual problems at home which are affecting the student at school.

Teach students the problem-solving strategy SOCS (Roosa, 974).

S - situation or problem
O - options for solving
C - consequences of each option
S - simulation of chosen option prior to implementation.

Encourage students to block out mentally non-school related activities and relationships, while concentrating on academics.

Solicit help from health and P.E. teachers to explain to students the emotional and physical changes which could affect and/or create problems for them.

Refer students with serious problems to the counselor.

Contact appropriate community agencies/services.

Decreasing the Fear of Making Errors

Be positive!

State clearly the expectations of each lesson for the students so they know exactly what they are to learn and do.

Make certain that assignments are within the students' ability levels.

Use a variety of teacher/assignment/test methods to discover which ones lead to success for the students.

See the topic "Teaching Types of Tests" in the Study Skills section.

Adapt work to meet individual needs/abilities, when appropriate.

Give the students options of assignments to complete.

Work one-to-one with students experiencing difficulty to avoid correcting a student in front of the class.

Make assignments on a buddy system or in small groups in order to relieve a student from having total responsibility.

Provide study guides or outlines to complete, to help the students understand more fully precisely what they should learn in order to succeed.

Teach test-taking strategies.

See the Study Skills section for the topic "Teaching Test Taking."

Have students explain directions, assignments, major points, in their own words, rather then merely asking if they understand.

Teach methods of relaxation during stress situations: deep-breathing, muscle relaxing.

See the topic "Relaxing Techniques."

Allow students to tape reports if they are reluctant to speak in front of the class.

Teach error-monitoring strategies, such as self-cueing and charting.

Review the day's learning and homework assignment during the final minutes of the class period.

DECREASING THE FEAR OF MAKING ERRORS

Increase positive interactions with students to aid in building confidence.

- Praise students frequently even for small things.
- Be encouraging when a failure situation is handled well.

Eliminate "I can't" statements by teaching appropriate positive statements.

- Have the student keep a graph of the positive and negative statements made with the goal of increasing the positive ones.

Have students keep a journal of personal strengths and weaknesses.

Do not grade down for spelling and writing if these skills are not pertinent to the assignment.

- Give separate grades for content and mechanics.

Consider using a different system for grading special education students.

- Give them a certain number of points automatically, like a handicap in golf or bowling.
- Require only the most basic answers, rather than ones from higher cognitive levels.

See the topic "Building Self-Concept."

Establishing Satisfactory Peer Relationships

Teach appropriate and acceptable behaviors through group discussions, role playing, creative writing assignments, pictures, and reading materials.

Teach students alternatives for solving social conflicts.

Conduct class discussions on topics such as individuality, accepting others, and making friends

Have students make a list of characteristics they like in others and encourage them to establish those qualities in themselves.

Have students list positive and negative characteristics they feel they possess.

- Encourage them to accentuate the positive and eliminate the negative.
- Discuss others' expectations concerning personal grooming, behavior, and physical appearance.

Honor a different student each week, emphasizing positive qualities.

- Pick students who need the boost with their peers.
- Feature the student on a bulletin board or poster.
- Have other students write a positive letter to the selected student.

Give students, who are having difficulty relating to others, jobs/assignments visible to the class which enhance their prestige with the group.

Make all students aware of the accomplishments achieved by others in the classroom.

Make assignments that small groups can work on together to encourage the formation of new friendships.

Have older students assist newer ones in getting around school and in doing assignments.

Organize clubs (chess, sewing, music) uniting students with similar interests and concerns.

See the topics "Relating to People" and "Building Self-Concept."

Fostering Self-Control

Use stories, pictures, comics, to show students how other people deal appropriately with trying situations.

Employ role-playing as a teaching strategy.

Have students act out inappropriate and appropriate behavior.

Use situations which involve peer-to-peer examples as well as student-to-adult/authority figure situations.

Discuss the positive and negative results, having the students establish the reasons for them.

Conduct class discussions on ways to control feelings.

Encourage students to learn positive, workable methods from one another.

Discuss appropriate methods of dealing with given situations.

Encourage students to discuss rationally their feelings and to search for the reasons for them. When the reasons are established, students can foster the positive and extinguish the negative.

Set up contracts with the student who behaves inappropriately.

Reinforce positive actions on a daily basis.

Have students keep records of their behavior, attitudes, and achievements during the day for self-evaluation and improvement.

Praise students immediately for handling a situation well.

Work with parent(s) to provide positive reinforcement at home for students who improve in self-control. Parents can provide rewards which the teacher cannot and for which the student might be more willing to work (a new bike, going skating).

Encourage students to express their concerns with a trusted adult who can work one-to-one with them in sorting through feelings and in learning self-control.

Have the counselor work with small groups of students who need guidance in learning appropriate ways of relating to people.

Provide a "time-out" area in the classroom or in the school building for students who are experiencing difficulty in self-control.

Involve students in small group assignments where they can have good role models and establish positive peer relationships.

Vary assignments to meet the needs of all students.

Allow for movement about the classroom for students who have difficulty staying seated for long periods.

See the topic: "Reinforcing and Recognizing Students" in the Instructional Techniques section, see the topics "Relating to People" and "Building Self-Concept" in this section.

Lessening Student Dependency

State clearly the learning expected for each class period.

Involve students in making classroom/school rules and consequences for infractions.

Post rules and consequences in the room.

Break content materials into manageable steps.

Have realistic expectations of students' abilities.

Post an outline of goals and objectives in the classroom for quick reference.

Provide assignments/directions on the chalkboard or on tape for later reference in the period.

State directions clearly on each work sheet to eliminate questions concerning procedure.

Use work sheets which are legible.

Ask students to restate directions in their own words to ensure understanding.

Check first responses to be certain students understand how to complete the assignment.

Use self-checking materials, independent learning activities, and programmed learning materials.

Encourage students to keep a pocket notebook for recording assignments (homework, projects, reports).

Use small group instruction, the buddy system, and peer tutors.

Measure skills frequently to determine effective teaching and the students' learning.

Encourage students to keep a "Things to Do" list.

Teach strategies of memory rehearsal and mnemonic devices.

See Study Skills section for topics: "Completing Assignments in Class," "Giving Oral Directions," "Writing Directions," and "Working Independently.

See Instructional Techniques section for topic "Elicting Active Participation."

Moving Through the Halls

Post and explain the floor plan of the building.

Post school rules and consequences, explaining the need for each one.

Accompany the group, if possible, to make sure they know the way at the beginning of the year.

Cooperate with administrative personnel and other staff members in fostering orderly behavior in the halls; consider the following activities when appropriate:

Be present in halls during class changes.

Listen for inappropriate language.

Check rest rooms for smoking.

Ensure that punishments, when infractions occur, are logical.

Encourage initating a "hall sweep" program if tardies or other hall infractions are numerous and school-wide.

Consider a sequence such as the following:

Teachers are assign specific stations in the halls at the beginning of their planning period.

Students remaining in the hall after the tardy bell rings are escorted to class and given a tardy slip to sign.

After three tardies, student receives a one-day assignment to detention hall.

Reward students when appropriate behavior occurs.

Relating to People

Explain personal boundaries and space to students.

- Teach them how to judge the appropriate distances for friendly, personal, and public conversations.

Teach students how to judge facial expressions and gestures.

Permit students to relay messages to other teachers, custodians, administrative staff, and cafeteria employees.

Encourage students to interact with one another and with adults.

Conduct class discussions concerning personal feelings and methods of successfully relating to other people.

Role play situations in which the characters relate effectively or fail to do so.

- Discuss why they do/do not succeed.

See the topic "Establishing Satisfactory Peer Relationships."

Relaxing Techniques

Learn relaxation techniques to reduce job-related stress and to make the classroom atmosphere more positive and enriching for the students.

Steps for relaxing (student/teacher).

Find a quiet, comfortable place to sit.

Breathe evenly with eyes closed.

Concentrate on breathing.

Think about relaxing body parts, beginning with the feet and moving up to the head and face.

Feel the muscles relaxing and tension draining.

Think a pleasant thought or recall a happy experience.

Create a positive statement and repeat it mentally several times (for example, I am relaxed, calm, and a good teacher/student).

Open eyes and concentrate on bodily sensations.

Practice these techniques to use whenever tension begins.

Tell students that learning these techniques can help them feel better about themselves.

Give students opportunity to experience tension and relaxation by letting them make and release a fist.

Have students relax their necks so that their heads can be easily moved.

Give students opportunities for practice.

Use techniques whenever class needs calming (for example, coming in from P.E., an exciting sports event, an assembly, or disagreements).

Use prior to taking tests, oral reports, or other stress-building activities.

Speaking Correctly

Teach students the difference between "standard" and "street" language, emphasizing the necessity for learning both. Most students already know the two languages but need to be encouraged to use each appropriately.

Explain that the use of standard English is required in most careers.

When a student makes a statement or asks a question, correct the student's grammar in the reply without embarrassing the student by requiring correct repetition (e.g., "Can I go to my locker?" "Yes, you may go to your locker").

Help students become aware of voice features: pitch, loudness, tempo.

Help the students become aware of special problems, such as giggling, whispering, or yawning, by using a cueing system which the teacher and the student develop together.

Refer students with severe language deficits, articulation problems, or stuttering to the Speech and Language clinician. The clinician can determine if the student needs placement in a special program for assistance and can make suggestions for help on procedures to use in the classroom.

Correct inappropriate language by working with the individual student rather than by reacting in front of the class.

Identify specifically, with the individual student, what is considered inappropriate language.

Direct the student to find ten words in the dictionary which could be substituted for the offensive word.

Consider designing a "cuss word" box. If students feel the urge to swear, the word(s) may be written and placed in the box.

Suggest that each student devise three expressions to use as replacements for inappropriate language. Model use of substitutions.

Reinforce students for the use of appropriate language.

Encourage an expanded oral vocabulary of those students who may not have as extensive a vocabulary as their peers.

Allow students to share experience stories orally.

Have students look at interesting pictures and describe what is happening and their feelings.

Let students give oral directions for finding a hidden object in the room.

Have students develop vocabulary lists of new words they hear other students or teachers using, ones they hear on TV, and from other sources.

Solve logic problems orally in class.

Role play situations requiring oral communication.

Have students complete open-ended sentences and stories orally.

Reinforce students for displaying correct language skills.

Teaching School Survival Skills

Explain responsibilities of middle school students during the first week of classes.

Deal with students as fifth grade students in transition at first, rather than as sixth grade students who know the routine.

Concentrate on a few changes at a time instead of demanding total adjustment at once. For example:

> During one week concentrate on bringing materials to class. The next week work on returning homework.

Establish rules and guidelines. Everyone needs to know what is expected of them in order to succeed and to know what the consequences are for not abiding by the rules.

> Post the rules and consequences in the classroom for quick reference.
>
> Be consistent in enforcing both the rules and the consequences.

Teach organizational skills.

> When students can organize their work and learning, they will be able to achieve greater success and not feel overwhelmed and frustrated.
>
> Be specific about appropriate materials needed for the class, so they can be prepared to complete assignments.

Teach students the progression of room numbers to help them in locating classrooms.

> Explain that room numbers beginning with one will be on the first floor, number two, on the second floor.
>
> Explain that, usually, one side of the hall will have even room numbers and the other odd.
>
> Post a floor plan of the building for student reference.

Assign for homework the information needed in filling out enrollment sheets.

Explain to the students the procedure for using combination locks.

> Practice this procedure in fifth grade classrooms and at home.

Apply the concepts being learned in class to everyday life.

(When students can understand the relationship of concepts being taught to specific aspects of their environment, the desire to master the learning is greatly increased.)

See the topics "Budgeting Break Time" and "Moving Through the Halls."

Content Areas

Art

Include art activities as assignments/projects in academic classes.

Make stained glass drawings when studying the Renaissance period.

Illustrate vocabulary words in science or language arts.

Draw maps of countries/areas being studied in social studies.

Describe proper approach to a project and the components which should be included before the students begin.

Demonstrate one technique or step at a time.

Allow students the time necessary to complete each phase before proceeding to the next.

Use the buddy system. Students with fine motor problems will then have someone to assist them in cutting, drawing. Students who are unsure of a procedure will receive assistance without having to ask the teacher.

Provide a choice of media, where possible.

Plan in advance for students' stitchery projects, requiring only an outline.

Let more capable students create their own designs.

Assist those who need a design provided for them.

Expand students' work through the use of color, material, and a variety of stitches.

Offer encouragement and praise.

See the topics: "Thinking Creatively" and "Assigning Long-Range Projects" in the Study Skills section.

See the Instructional Techniques section for topics: "Eliciting Active Participation," "Motivating Students," and "Reinforcing and Recognizing Students."

Careers

Allow students to explore possible careers from the twelve occupational clusters.

Discuss potential careers as they relate to units being studied in various classes.

Display visuals on bulletin boards.

Observe school-wide Career Month.

- Host a Career Day with representatives of various professions and vocations available for students' interviews.

- Have each student dress as a member of a chosen profession for one day.

Observe various career-related weeks, such as Dental Health Week or Secretaries' Week.

Create seek-and-find or other puzzles naming careers.

Home Economics

Task-analyze a skill, teaching one step at a time until mastery is reached.

State clearly the anticipated learning and what is to be accomplished by the end of the period.

Model each required step for students.

Provide a list of specialized terms and their definitions.

Post these in the room.

Have students make a copy to keep in their notebooks.

Use a buddy system so students can assist one another.

Remember that completion of a project may be more important for some students than perfection.

See Study Skills section of this manual for topics "Giving Oral Directions" and "Writing Directions."

See Coping Skills section for topics: "Building Self-Concept" and "Lessening Student Dependency."

Industrial Arts

Post safety rules and review them frequently.

Use standard color codes for posters, equipment, and tools.

Identify the tools, their names, and uses.

Task-analyze a skill, teaching one step at a time until mastery is reached.

Model for students each required step.

Have students state in their own words steps they are to take before beginning work on a project.

Provide a list of specialized vocabulary and their definitions.

Use a buddy system so students can assist and monitor the safety of one another.

Remember that completion of a project may be more important than perfection for some students.

See the Study Skills section for topics: "Giving Oral Directions," "Improving Listening/Attending Skills," and "Assigning Long-Range Projects."

See the Coping Skills section for the topic: "Lessening Student Dependency" and "Decreasing the Fear of Making Errors."

Language

Expect students to participate in Young Authors program.

Utilize ideas in the Jefferson County Public Schools Handbook for Teachers of Young Authors.

Have students write a poem using word(s) from the vocabulary list.

Have students write a paragraph and then identify the parts of speech used.

Encourage students to diagram sentences.

Correct incorrect grammatical structure on all assignments or have students make their own corrections.

Have students build sentences from vocabulary placed on sentence-strip flash cards.

Require students to always answer in complete sentences.

Utilize teaching machine in classroom.

Employ visual and auditory stimuli to increase language experiences.

Teach students to use capitals and punctuation correctly.

Stress the importance of noun/verb agreement.

Provide exercises for students to practice this skill.

Allow students to spell selected words with uncooked alphabet noodles.

Relate experiences to students' personal lives.

Library Usage

Be certain students know what is available in the library for their use and how to locate what they need.

Teach the Dewey Decimal System.

Practice sequencing books numerically as they would be found on the shelves.

Give students a list of Dewey Decimal numerals and have them write the title of a book found for each numeral.

Explain to students the use of the card catalog.

Develop activities for students to research topics in the card catalog.

Have students look up the same book as many ways as possible.

Give students a sample card to label author, publisher, title, copyright, pages, and other vital information.

Teach students color codes used for AV equipment.

Acquaint students with Readers' Guide, an index to magazines.

Have students submit a library plan (questions to be answered) to the teacher.

Let each student set goals according to special interests.

Determine that the questions are reasonable before allowing students to go to the library to seek the answers.

Solicit the help of the media center specialist.

See Study Skills section of this manual for topics: "Improving Reference Skills," "Assigning Reports," and "Alphabetizing Words."

Mathematics

Write all numbers and signs clearly and large enough for students to see.

Model problem-solving for students.

Have students state sequentially the procedure needed in solving a problem.

Have students memorize appropriate math vocabulary with definitions.

Let students make a dictionary of terms/key words for personal reference.

Use manipulative objects when appropriate.

Draw arrows or use colors to direct students' attention to the beginning point of a problem.

Space problems far enough apart on a work sheet so that students will not be distracted, will be less likely to lose their place, and will have sufficient space in which to work.

Provide examples of correct solutions on each work sheet in order to eliminate confusion.

Have students make a notebook in which they keep examples of all types of problems for reference.

Divide tests or work sheets into sections of similar problems.

Cut apart papers for students who are highly distractable, so they can successfully work one section at a time.

Have students use lined paper turned sideways, writing one number between each two lines, to keep columns aligned.

Allow students to use their fingers to count, if necessary.

Consider posting addition and multiplication tables in the room.

Determine the part of a problem that is causing difficulty, fill in all other parts, and concentrate on that one portion.

Use games to reinforce concepts.

Give assignments that will be fun for students, occasionally: riddles, shade-ins, color-by-answer.

Administer a three-minute, 100-problem basic facts test at regular intervals.

Have students compete against themselves rather than each other.

Let each student make a personal graph of scores.

Prepare charts and manipulatives to increase students' understanding of fractions, the concept of whole and part.

Post a chart in the classroom designating key words to look for when doing word problems (in all, spent, put together, how many more, each one gets).

Allow students to create word problems for classmates to solve.

Use students' names in word problems.

Have students cross out inappropriate information included in word problems.

Use the buddy system or peer tutoring to assist weaker students.

Teach students self-checking methods.

Examples:

Subtraction can be used to check addition and simple division.

Addition can be used to check subtraction and simple multiplication.

Division can be used to check multiplication.

Multiplication can be used to check division.

Consider teaching finger multiplication to students who have difficulty remembering the facts for 6's, 7's, 8's, and 9's. (They must know lower number tables.)

Assign the following values: thumb - 6; thumb and index finger - 7; thumb + index finger + middle finger - 8; thumb and index finger and middle finger + ring finger - 9; thumb and index finger and middle finger and ring finger and little finger - 10.

Each hand represents a numeral in the fact.

Directions:

Have student extend the fingers which correspond to the numerals in the problem.
The fingers that are extended are counted by 10's.
The fingers that are tucked down are to be multiplied by each other.
Add the tens and ones for the answer.

Teach memory strategies such as clustering, associating, rehearsing, and imagery.

An example of clustering would be the learning of a Social Security number by grouping digits into three separate units.

Associating would be employed in learning the number of days in each month by memorizing the poem:

> Thirty days hath September, April, June, and November.
> All the rest have thirty-one
> Except February alone which has four plus twenty-four
> And leap year gives it one day more.

An example of rehearsing would be repeating the sequence of a problem-solving activity prior to doing it.

Imagery is used when the students are encouraged to close their eyes and visualize a basic fact after viewing or hearing it.

See the Study Skills section for topics: "Completing Assignments in Class," "Completing Homework," "Copying from the Chalkboard," Reasoning "Deductively," "Giving Oral Directions," "Working Independently," and "Using Work Sheets."

See the Coping Skills section for topics: "Decreasing the Fear of Making Errors" and "Lessening Student Dependency."

Music

Model for students as much as possible.

Read words to a song aloud before having students sing it in order to help those students who are poor readers.

Provide a list of musical terms and symbols and their definitions.

Post a list in the room.

Have students keep a copy in their notebooks.

Use visuals when discussing symbols, instruments, and composers.

Encourage students to write their own verses to songs.

See the section Instructional Techniques for the topic: "Eliciting Active Participation" and the Study Skills section for "Improving Listening/Attending Skills."

See the Coping Skills section for the topic: "Building Self-Concept."

Physical Education

Task-analyze a skill, teaching one part at a time until students attain mastery.

Demonstrate or present pictorially the rules for a game, illustrating the appropriate move, position, or rule infraction.

Assign teams instead of allowing captains to choose, reducing the possibility of some students frequently being the last ones chosen.

Provide quiet periods after times of intensive stimulation. This strategy may help students learn to control levels of activity.

Use manual guidance if needed, manipulating student's body parts to complete the correct movements.

Keep in mind the following basic functions when adapting a program:

It should increase the level of fitness and increase self-confidence, enhancing students' understanding of their limitations, yet emphasizing their potential.

It should develop an appreciation for physical activity which will stimulate a desire for continued involvement in fitness.

It should develop the musculature and coordination required for everyday life or work.

Direct specific questions concerning adaptive physical education to the adaptive physical education specialist in the school district.

See the Study Skills section of this manual for the topic: "Giving Oral Directions."

See the Coping Skills section for the topic: "Establishing Satisfactory Peer Relationships."

Reading

Teach decoding skills.

Review basic consonant, blend, long and short vowel, diphthong, digraph, sounds.

Work on irregular letter combinations.

Teach the ten rules of syllabication.

Have students divide an unfamiliar work into syllables before attempting to sound it out.

Be sure students know how to use the pronunciation listing under each dictionary entry.

Teach meanings of root words, prefixes, and suffixes.

Teach comprehension skills.

Prior to teaching a lesson, identify new or difficult words essential to understanding the material.

Pronounce the new word.

Read a sentence using the new word.

Develop its meaning from students' experiences.

Pronounce the word again.

Have students use it in a sentence.

Omit a word from a sentence and have students supply the missing word. Accept any word which would make sense.

Read a paragraph to the class.

Have students follow silently.

Omit a word and ask them to supply the correct word.

Stop in the middle of a sentence/paragraph and have students complete it.

Have students look at pictures to determine the content of the accompanying passage.

Provide students with study guides or outlines to complete while reading.

Have students select the topic/main idea of a given story or paragraph.

Encourage students to write characterizations after selecting major characters.

Have students match newspaper articles to headlines or chapter headings to content.

Supplement with multimedia or multisensory experiences (e.g., movies, video tape, demonstrations by guest speakers, field trips, television programs) whenever possible.

Consult the media center specialist or a special education teacher for high interest/low reading level materials for those students who need them.

Note that numerous classic novels have been rewritten at lower reading levels.

Use stories from The Louisville Times SCENE, "The Jelly Bean Journal."

Allow reports to be based on movies or television specials rather than on written research.

Introduce concepts such as subject-verb agreement or tense, where rules may be involved, by giving examples and having students copy all examples and rules into a reference booklet.

Give each student a newspaper page and colored marker. Direct him/her to circle a given new word each time it appears in a story.

Tape the material to be read so that some students may listen, using headphones, while others are reading silently.

Vary the types of questions according to students' level.

For students who are experiencing difficulty, remain on the basic levels of knowledge, comprehension, and application.

Challenge more capable students by introducing the levels of analysis, synthesis, and evaluation.

Stress the cues available from pictures, charts, key words, headings.

Keep assignments brief and on students' level.

Encourage both individual oral and group choral reading.

See the Study Skills section of this manual for topics: "Categorizing Data," "Taking Notes," "Organizing by Outlining," "Improving Reference Skills," "Assigning Reports," "Sequencing Events," "Summarizing for Understanding," "Using Work Sheets," and "Writing Directions."

See the Coping Skills section of this manual for topics: "Speaking Correctly," "Building Self-Concept," "Decreasing the Fear of Making Errors," and "Lessening Student Dependency."

Science

Tell students what you expect them to learn and to accomplish by the end of the period.

Write these points on the board.

Direct students' attention to each point while explaining it.

Give students an outline of material to be covered for the week/unit.

Have students fill in the outline as they study.

Let each student make a notebook of completed outlines to use when studying for a test.

Provide clues stating where information can be found when doing work sheets (page numbers, topic headings).

Introduce all new vocabulary before it is used in the lesson.

Use concrete objects or pictures when giving the definitions, if possible.

Provide a list of specialized vocabulary with definitions for students to keep in their notebooks for easy reference.

Help students create gimmicks to aid in remembering the concepts/material being taught (e.g., stalactite--ceiling, hang tight to the ceiling; stalagmite--ground, built up from the ground).

Give students a list of the Greek and Latin root words and affixes related to science.

Review/practice defining terms on a regular basis with students.

Read over an entire experiment with the student, asking the student to paraphrase the directions prior to beginning.

Model for students before allowing them to conduct an experiment.

Display science materials in the room to provoke students' curiosity.

Attach questions for research to a piece of equipment/materials. Ask students to research and report answer (e.g., How long do fish live? could be taped on an aquarium).

Use the buddy system to assist students who are experiencing difficulty and to ensure the following of safety procedures.

Assign students work at a learning center which other students have designed as a science project.

Provide textbooks which have important ideas and concepts underlined or highlighted for students who are poor readers.

Give students practice in responding to typical test questions in their usual format.

> See the Study Skills section for the topics: "Teaching Types of Tests" and "Teaching Test Taking."

Use the last five minutes of class to summarize.

> Ask students to name one thing they learned during the period.
>
> Review homework assignments and directions.

Assign construction of mini-books on specific topics on various reading levels to be used as future reference materials by students.

> Cut and paste out-of-use textbooks written on a given grade level into new topical books.

Use questions which systematically provide for memory and for convergent, divergent, and evaluative thinking.

Observe students actively involved in science activities for indications of comprehension of information instead of relying only on written quizzes and tests.

See the Study Skills section for topics: "Categorizing Data," "Reasoning Deductively," "Giving Oral Directions," and "Sequencing Events."

See Coping Skills section for topic: "Decreasing the Fear of Making Errors."

Social Studies

State clearly the learning for the day and what is expected of students at the beginning of the period.

Introduce new vocabulary terms prior to beginning the lesson.

- Write them on the chalkboard.
- Have students write the terms and definitions in their notebooks for quick reference.

Put all important information on the chalkboard so it can be copied or provide study sheets.

Use simple terms when explaining new ideas.

- Have students define a term in their own words after it has been explained.

Teach practical skills students need to function in the world.

- Create activities involving knowledge of state and community.
- Draw maps of neighborhood.
- Explain difference between a city and a county.
- Stress knowledge of countries and continents.

Utilize students' personal experiences.

Allow students to express the ideas they have learned by drawing pictures, charts, or illustrations; building models; collecting various objects; taping a mock radio show or historical speech.

Have students take photographs illustrating a concept they are learning and then write captions to explain.

Utilize supplementary texts on students' reading level, when appropriate.

- See the media center specialist or a special education teacher for supplementary texts.

Color-code or underline important words or phrases in assignments, textbooks, or tests.

Give clues on work sheets as to where needed information can be found (page numbers, topic headings).

Make extensive use of audio-visual materials.

Use the buddy system, pairing a good reader with one who has difficulty.

Utilize small group instruction.

Have students paraphrase newspaper article about a specific city/state/country. Attach to/pinpoint on large map posted in classroom.

Allow students to create their own nation, designing the language, flag, government, map, climate, and other basic concepts.

Let the students watch a film on the topic being studied.

Have students write a summary in their own words.

Provide students with an outline to complete during or following the film.

Take the closing five minutes of class time to review the day's learning and to go over homework or project assignments.

See the Study Skills section for topics: "Improving Reference Skills," "Assigning Long-Range Projects," "Assigning Reports," "Thinking Creatively," "Teaching Test Taking," and "Working Independently."

See the Instructional Techniques section for topics: "Instructing Students with Low Reading Skills" and "Motivating Students."

Speech

Be a good role model.

Use grammar of standard English quality.

Enunciate clearly.

Refer students to speech and language clinician if misarticulation is evident or language development is not age-appropriate, either receptively or expressively or both.

Require students to speak in complete sentences.

Correct students whose expressions are grammatically incorrect without embarrassing them.

Encourage students to vary tone in their speaking and to use appropriate volume.

Spelling

Help students notice the similarities and differences among the words they are studying.

Show students how to find small familiar words in large ones.

Teach syllabication.

Say the word in syllables and spell each syllable as it is said.

Note with students root words, prefixes, and suffixes.

Have students use the words in a variety of activities (alphabetizing, using in sentences, writing all into one paragraph, defining, looking them up in the dictionary).

Write the word, omitting some letters, and have students fill in the blank for each letter omitted.

Present the manual alphabet (finger-spelling) and have students finger-spell as they study words. (See the section General Strategies.)

Spell the words aloud together.

Pair students to have them call and spell the words to one another.

Provide the same clue in daily practice that you give on the test.

Be consistent with designated definitions.

Consider giving extra-credit words on tests (days of the week, months, foods, number words).

Use key words from other content areas or creative writing for spelling words.

Teach students to use the following study method:

Look at the word carefully as it is pronounced.

Outline the word's configuration.

Trace the word.

Visualize the word with eyes closed.

Write the word.

Periodically review words previously taught.

Make arrangements with the special education resource teacher to give his/her students extra practice to enhance retention.

Give a practice test.

Consider allowing students who make 100% the privilege of not having to take the real test.

See the Study Skills section for topics: "Alphabetizing Words" and "Completing Assignments in Class."

See the Coping Skills section for the topic "Decreasing the Fear of Making Errors."

Writing Skills

Review correct cursive writing.

Indicate to students incorrectly formed letters in their work.

Demonstrate correct formations and have students practice.

Note: Poor handwriting should not lower grade.

Encourage students to proofread for mistakes.

Stress life-skills writing such as applications, letters, requests for materials or information, gift tags, and greeting cards.

Require students to write in complete sentences in all subject areas.

Use ink pens for specific assignments.

Teach sentence structure.

Work on the parts of speech required in a sentence.

Have students write a sentence including specific information and compare their efforts.

Show the class the various ways of stating the same information in different levels of sophistication of sentence structure.

Require the students to write sentences with vocabulary/spelling words.

Encourage them to use two or more of the given words in one sentence.

Insist on test/homework answers being in complete sentences.

Teach punctuation.

Correct punctuation on work turned in and explain to the student why the punctuation is needed.

Reduce a student's score if a sentence does not end with a period, question mark, or exclamation point.

Explain to the students the use of commas, semi-colons, colons, and quotation marks.

Follow up with teaching the proper use of capital letters by writing all of the sentence in lower case, after reviewing rules for capitalization.

Read the same sentence three ways. Have the students guess from voice inflection which mark is appropriate.

Teach paragraphing.

Give students rules for forming paragraphs (change in speaker, time, subject matter).

Have students divide a writing into paragraphs.

Consider combining this activity with adding appropriate capitalization and punctuation as students progress.

Have students state the reasons for new paragraphs in a story or portion of their assigned reading.

Encourage creative writing.

Use a familiar story to model incorporation of the five W's (who, what, where, when, and why) in creative writing assignments.

Assign homework or classwork occasionally that involves more than answering questions.

Give "what if" assignments (What if the sky were red? What if you had been a pioneer?).

Have students write the ending to a story.

Have students rewrite newspaper articles in first person as though they were there.

Give students seasonal topics as themes (e.g., "Frosty's Vacation," "Madeline Monster's Mischievous Tricks").

Encourage students to keep daily journal or diary.
Obtain spelling words/story ideas from journals.

Assign students topic of a first person story as a historical character.

Have word card boxes for major parts of speech. Let students select one words from each box to incorporate into paragraph.

Have students describe an object using as many of the five senses as possible.

Encourage students to proofread all writing assignments.

See the Study Skills section of this manual for topics: "Thinking Creatively," "Assigning Reports," and "Improving Reference Skills."

See the Coping Skills section for the topic "Speaking Correctly."

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CITIZEN'S REQUEST FOR REVIEW AND REEVALUATION OF INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIALS

The Jefferson County Board of Education endeavors to meet the needs of all its students by providing on all levels a wide range of instructional materials having diversity of appeal and different points of view. With respect to instructional materials, the Board supports the principles of intellectual freedom inherent in the First Amendment to the *Constitution of the United States* and in the *Library Bill of Rights and the Students' Right to Read* of the National Council of the Teachers of English.

The Board also recognizes that, despite the quality of instructional materials or the credibility of the process used for selecting instructional materials, occasional objections will arise. Therefore, in order to facilitate the resolution of any concerns related to instructional materials, the Board provides the following procedure for review and reevaluation.

Level I—Initial Concern

1. A person having a complaint related to instructional materials states the complaint to a local school principal or unit head or a designee.

2. The school official to whom the complaint is stated schedules a conference with the complainant to discuss the instructional materials.

3. The complainant and the school official discuss the instructional materials during the scheduled conference.

4. Within five (5) business days following the conference, the school official provides the complainant a written decision concerning the complaint.

Level II—Written Request for Review and Reevaluation

1. If a complainant is not satisfied with the school official's decision at Level I, the school official will assist the complainant in filing, with the Superintendent, a written request for review and reevaluation of the instructional materials.

2. The Superintendent accepts the written request for review and reevaluation of instructional materials with the purpose of rendering a decision concerning the complaint. (When appropriate, the Superintendent forwards the request to the Reconsideration Committee.)

3. When requested by the Superintendent, the Reconsideration Committee meets for purpose of formulating a recommendation to the Superintendent concerning the instructional materials.

4. Within twenty-five (25) business days of receiving the written request for review and reevaluation of the instructional materials, the Superintendent notifies, in writing, the complainant concerning disposition of the complaint.

Level III—Appeal

1. In the event the complainant is not satisfied with the Superintendent's decision regarding the instructional materials, the complainant may file with the Jefferson County Board of Education written request for the review of the complaint.

2. Within forty-five (45) business days of receiving the request the Board will notify the complainant of its decision.

Note: The Board considers appeals requesting the view of decisions related to the use of instructional materials to be serious matters. Therefore, person requesting such reviews are advised to present carefully documented, factual information substantiating their claims.

Only upon recommendation of the Superintendent shall access to challenged instructional materials be restricted during the reconsideration process.

REQUEST FOR RECONSIDERATION OF INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIALS

School _____

Please check type of material:

( ) Book	( ) Film	( ) Record
( ) Periodical	( ) Filmstrip	( ) Kit
( ) Pamphlet	( ) Cassette	( ) Other

Title _____

Author _____

Publisher or Producer _____

Request initiated by _____

Telephone _____ Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

The following questions are to be answered after the complainant has read, viewed, or listened to the school library material in its entirety. If sufficient space is not provided, attach additional sheets. (Please sign your name to each additional attachment.)

1. To what in the material do you object? (Please be specific. Cite pages, frames in a filmstrip, film sequence, et cetera.)

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

2. What do you believe is the theme or purpose of this material?

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

3. What do you feel might be the result of a student using this material?

4. For what age group would you recommend this material?

5. Is there anything good in this material? Please comment.

6. Would you care to recommend other instructional material of the same subject and format?

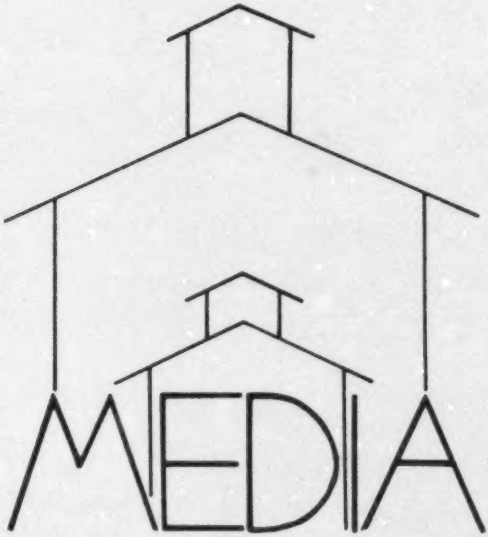
Signature of Complainant

Date

Please return completed form to the school principal.

9/82

TRANSITIONS ARE TOUGH
FIFTH GRADE TO SIXTH!



The transition between elementary and middle school is difficult. Students face differences in organizational structure and academic expectations. The students' physical/emotional changes of early puberty compound this adjustment.

This brochure is designed to highlight some of the transitional concerns of fifth year students and their parents. Tips are included to assist the students in making an easier transition. With prior realistic knowledge of middle school expectations, "nervous" sixth year students will adjust more readily.

Help given students prior to entering middle school can reduce fears and make those first few months of middle school a more relaxed and productive time.

MIDDLE SCHOOL STUDENTS ENCOUNTER:

- more independent work
- unsupervised time
- additional decisions to make
- more personal responsibilities
- frequent tests
- less individual attention
- more content area work
- "F" as a possible grade
- more teachers on a daily basis
- conduct grades for every class

MIDDLE SCHOOL FACILITIES INCLUDE:

- homerooms
- larger counseling and administrative staffs
- interdisciplinary teaming
- in-school suspension
- detention hall
- larger student bodies
- specific class periods
- lockers
- larger classes

SUBJECT AREAS AVAILABLE

Subjects required for a full year:

- Language Arts
- Science
- Math
- Social Studies

Subjects required for less than a year:

- Music
- Art
- Physical Education

Elective classes offered:

- Practical Arts
- Home Economics
- Industrial Arts

TYPICAL SCHEDULE

PERIOD		ROOM NO.	TIME
Homeroom	6B	215	7:50 - 8:00
1st	Science	110	8:05 - 9:00
2nd	Math	212	9:05 - 10:00
3rd	Language Arts	208	10:05 - 11:00
4th	Social Studies	210	11:05 - 12:20 (Lunch-20 minutes)
5th	Music	114	12:25 - 1:20
6th	Art	109	1:25 - 2:20

GRADING PROCEDURES

- Six-week grading periods
- 3 six-week periods in a semester
- 2 semesters per year
- 1 final grade

Criteria for grades:

65%-75% Assigned daily work including: participation, homework, class assignments, note taking, discussions, quizzes, and special projects

25%-35% Test scores

ACADEMIC

A 93 - 100% excellent
B 86 - 92% above average
C 79 - 85% average
D 70 - 78% below average
F 0 - 69% failing
I - incomplete due to excused absence

CONDUCT

A = Excellent
B = Above Average
C = Average
D = Below Average—parent conference advised
F = Unacceptable—parent conference urgently needed

Sample Report Card

	1st	2nd	3rd	1st Sem.	4th	5th	6th	2nd Sem.	Final
Academic									
Conduct									

STUDENTS SHOULD BE ABLE TO:

- Fill out enrollment forms requiring family information.
- Find room numbers in a building with more than one floor.
- Use combination locks.
- Move through the halls without supervision, arriving on time for class.
- Go to lunch without supervision.
- Come to each class prepared and organized with the necessary materials.
- Manage time in order to complete assignments.
- Find information in the library and use reference materials such as a dictionary and encyclopedia.
- Work independently in completing long-term projects while doing other daily homework assignments.
- Take notes and use them in studying for a test.
- Use problem-solving skills necessary for math application.
- Take various types of tests and be aware of thought processes such as deductive reasoning.

ADDITIONAL SUGGESTIONS

Plan a parent-teacher conference to discuss the specific expectations of the students for middle school, the skills they will need, and the information in this brochure.

Take the students to their middle school for a visit. Discuss how it differs from elementary school.

Meet with sixth grade teachers at the middle school which students will attend for more precise suggestions.

Consider waiting until student adjusts to middle school before making any changes in special education placement.

Create a period for study skills for fifth grade students who exhibit difficulty with organizing, independent studying, completing assignments, and other basic skills.

Donald W. Ingwerson, Ed.D.
Superintendent

Jefferson County Public Schools
Louisville, Kentucky

Project MEDIA (Middle and Elementary Direct Instruction Alternatives) is a federally funded project designed to train teachers in ways to help ease the transition of students from elementary to middle schools.

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